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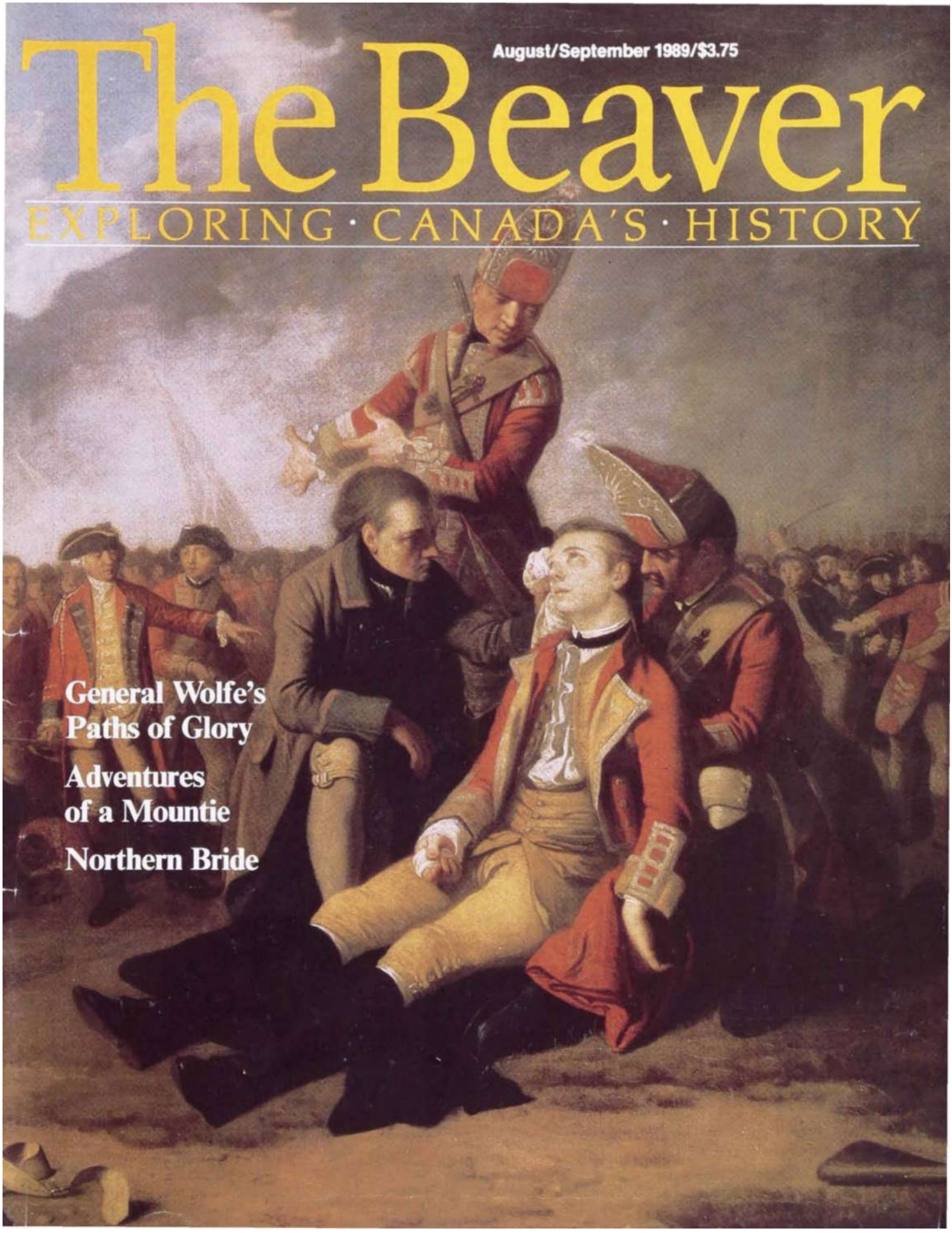
The Beaver

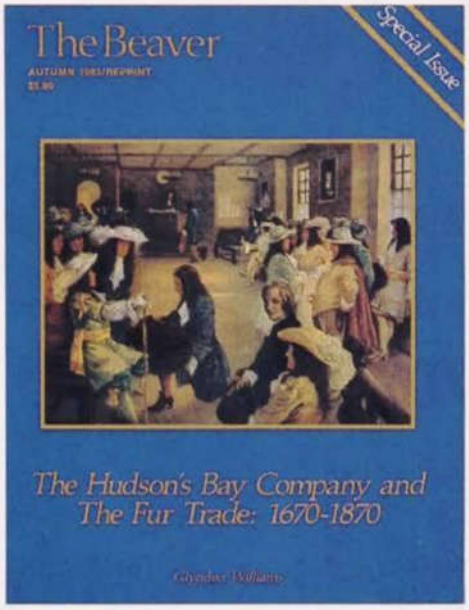
EXPLORING · CANADA'S · HISTORY



General Wolfe's Paths of Glory

Adventures of a Mountie

Northern Bride



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By GLYNDWR WILLIAMS

86 pages. Illustrated

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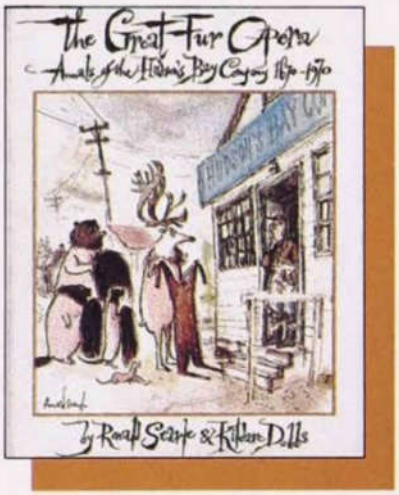

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Editor:
Christopher Dafoe
Managing Editor:
Carol Preston

Advertising Representative:
Sandra Waller
496 Cranbrooke Ave.,
North York, Ontario,
M5M 1N7
(416) 782-7401.

Advisory Board:
Shirlee A. Smith
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Cover:
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The Beaver

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THOSE PATHS

"Gentlemen, I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec . . ."

General James Wolfe has not recited Thomas Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* for the last fifty years or so. No more do we hear him, *sotto voce,* intone:

> The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
> The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
> The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
> And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

And no longer do our spines tingle as his soldiers ply their "muffled oars" towards the cliffs of Quebec while he so poignantly foreshadows his immediate future:

> The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
> And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Awaits alike the inevitable hour —
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

"Gentlemen," he used to say, "I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec".

He had said so many, many times. In almost every nineteenth-century account of the Battle of Quebec it was averred that in the small hours of 13 September 1759, as his flotilla of troops made its way down the St. Lawrence on their historic siege, General Wolfe stood in the bow of the lead craft and recited the famous poem. Sometimes he murmured but a single line — "The paths of glory lead but to the grave" — his heart full of foreboding or his thoughts focussed on his distant mother and sweetheart, making the whole moment "fraught with mournful meaning". Often he recited the whole poem "as silently and swiftly, unchallenged by the French sentries, Wolfe's flotilla dropped down the stream in the shade of the overhanging cliffs".

In A.G. Bradley's *Wolfe,* for example, we witness the thirty boats creeping along "in the shadow of the north shore" of the St. Lawrence River. "The crickets trilled from the woods, the bull-frogs boomed from the reedy backwaters, a screech-owl or a whip-poor-will answered from overhanging orchards. In the boats not a soldier stirred or spoke". No one, that is, except General Wolfe, who, "at this supreme crisis of his life, when the slightest misadventure meant failure or almost ruin, was reciting in solemn and half-whispered tones to the officers the beautiful lines of Gray's 'Elegy'. . . . How deeply suggestive must the familiar stanza have sounded in after years to the fortunate few who could recall the hushed tones of their heroic leader as he drifted onwards through the darkness to fame and death!"

Similarly, whether in Wright's *Life of Wolfe,* Francis Parkman's *Montcalm and Wolfe,* A.G. Doughty's *Siege of Quebec,* William Wood's *Fight for Canada,* or Beckles Willson's *Canada,* the necessary silence of the battle assault was broken in a most unmilitary fashion by the voice of a general reciting poetry.

Until the first decades of this century. Then the history books began to change. Though schoolteachers might, using the old sources, still teach romance as truth, historians began to regard the "Elegy" episode as either a "pretty story" adorning the pages of "picturesque history" or as pure fairy tale. Some would, if they were telling Wolfe's full story, allow him to recite the poem on the day before the battle, for evidence shows that he did indeed have a copy of the poem with him — given him by his sweetheart, Miss Katherine Lowther, and annotated in his own hand. Others might add a footnote acknowledging the tale; but most — especially the modern Canadian historians — would omit any reference to it.

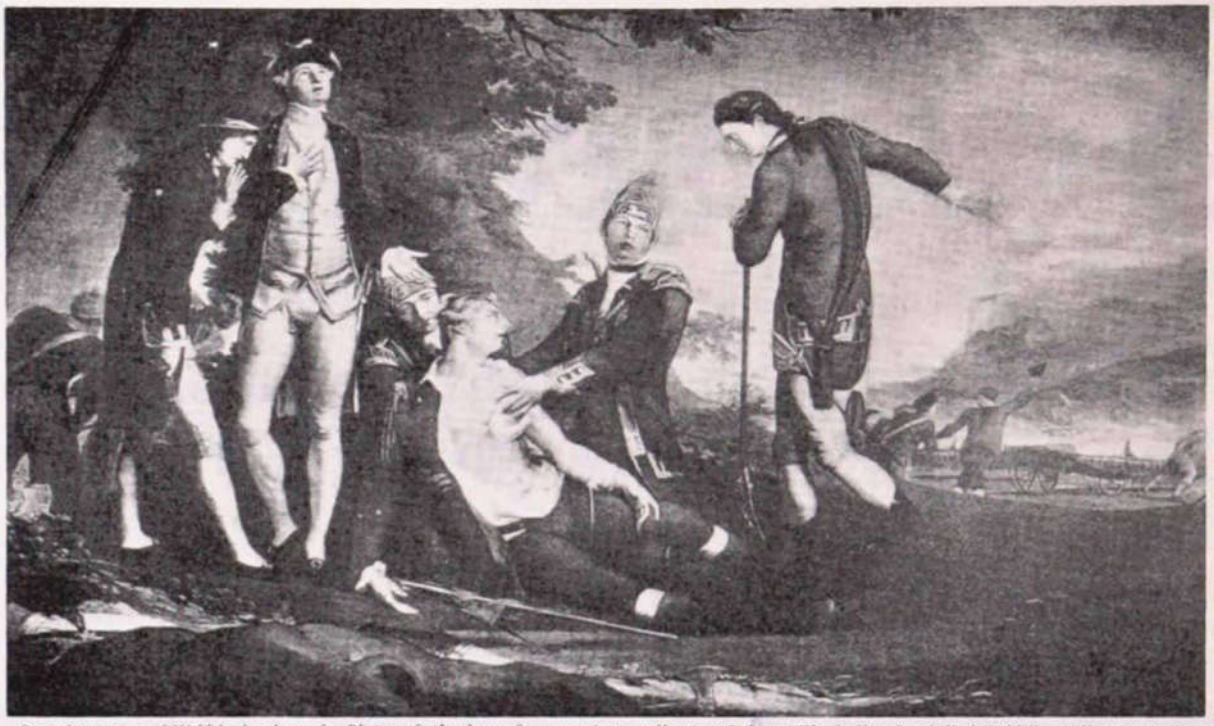
Nearly all began to agree that the *a priori* evidence is simply weighted too heavily against the popular

Benjamin West's "The Death of General Wolfe", from the collection of the National Gallery of Canada, represents death on the battlefield at its most romantic.

OF GLORY

General Wolfe and the Romantic School of British Imperial History

BY R.G. MOYLES

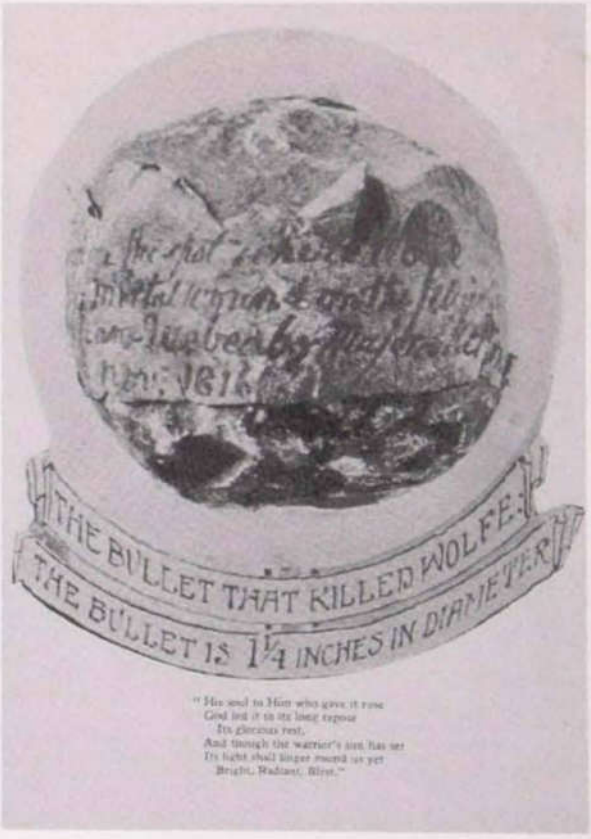


Barry's version of Wolfe's death on the Plains of Abraham, from a private collection. Below: "The bullet that killed Wolfe", an illustration in "The Pictorial Life of Wolfe" published by A.E. Wolfe-Aylward in 1924.

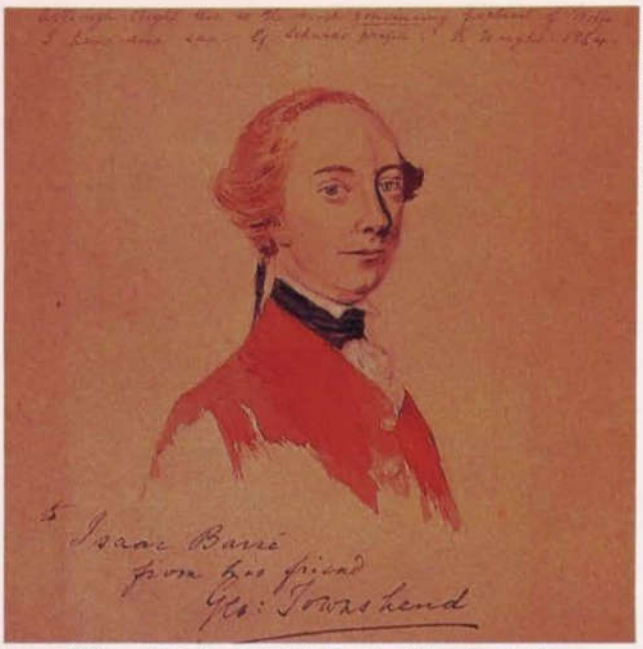
reconstruction: that a seasoned general, advancing in stealth close under the enemy's nose, should read aloud is quite preposterous. If the legend were true, they argued, it would cast grave doubt on Wolfe's mental balance at the time. "By a curious coincidence", wrote F. E. Whitton in 1929, "the night march across the desert prior to Tel-el-Kebir [Egyptian campaign of 1882] occurred on the anniversary of the night descent of the St. Lawrence prior to Quebec. There are many survivors of Tel-el-Kebir still with us, and these will explode with Homeric laughter if it is ever suggested to them that during the advance, when absolute silence was as essential as it was on the St. Lawrence just a century and a quarter earlier, Sir Garnet Wolseley took the opportunity to recite a poem". Thus it is that by the 1920s the episode of the "Elegy" had almost entirely disappeared.

But why, for so long, did such an implausible story persist in the most reputable historical accounts? Why did men like Thomas Carlyle, A.G. Doughty and the trustworthy Bradley make so much of an unlikely event? And why, so suddenly, did it lose all credibility?

The answer usually given is that historians, as a whole, began to disfavour picturesque history and began to demand a greater regard for historical accuracy. There is some truth in that, of course, but like most simple answers, it does not go far enough, for the appearance and disappearance of the "Elegy" has as



Grenadiers of the 47th and 48th Regiments of Foot, units in the British Army that served at Quebec under Wolfe.



McCord Museum, Montreal

James Wolfe, a colour sketch made by his friend Brigadier the Hon. George Townshend a few days before Wolfe's death.

much (and perhaps more) to do with social attitudes as it has with changing historiography. In the late nineteenth century, when the story gained its greatest credence, England needed heroes like Wolfe to be the symbols of her imperial greatness, just as in the 1760s she had greater need of Wolfe's morale-boosting sacrifice than she had of his military victory. And when, in the first decades of this century, imperial fervour faded — when, indeed, Wolfe's story became a Canadian rather than a British story — the over-riding need to glorify a rather inglorious event no longer existed. Canadian fair-mindedness, rather than British self-esteem governed historical writing.

The story of General Wolfe's victory at Quebec was, from the very beginning, an idealized version of the truth. In the years immediately preceding the battle, the French were winning all the battles. The loss of Oswego, a failure at Louisbourg, the surrender of Fort William Henry, the humiliation of the Black Hole of Calcutta, as well as several defeats in Europe, plunged the nation into gloom. Moreover, in 1759 England was fighting France on four different continents; the bulk of its army was abroad and only a small force remained at home. The possibility of a French invasion of England made the whole nation uneasy; therefore, when news began to arrive of a victory in Germany, followed a short while later by a dispatch describing a French naval defeat off Lagos, the English were not only relieved but jubilant.

From that point the euphoria began to build: Amherst's capture of Fort Ticonderoga, and Johnson's victory at Fort Niagara swelled the British breast, until Wolfe's defeat of Montcalm came as "manna from Heaven". No one would dare to call it a mere minor though "brilliant" episode in a larger campaign. The fact that the French in Canada did not capitulate until September 1760, that it took a great deal of fighting to subdue the forces of Lévis (Montcalm's second-in-command), did not matter. These events did not possess the dramatic moment: the "pathos of Wolfe's death in the moment of victory, the cutting short in early manhood of a life so full of promise, and the dying words, so eloquent of soldierly sacrifice", made this seem an apotheosis. And in the months that followed the eulogies and panegyrics were so pervasive, and the laurel wreath so firmly planted on Wolfe's heroic brow, that no amount of common-sense could ever hope to tarnish the mythology.

For almost a century, therefore, Wolfe's martyr-like death, so vividly depicted in Benjamin West's famous painting, was sufficient to sustain the myth. In the late nineteenth century, however, when Wolfe was revived as a symbol of the British imperial spirit, something new was needed. For now, in the Age of New Imperialism, when Britain needed propaganda more than she needed fact, Wolfe would become the kind of hero to whom the young imperial guardians — the explorers, soldiers, civil servants and missionaries — could

Katherine Lowther, Wolfe's fiancée, who is said to have presented him with a copy of Gray's "Elegy".

look in their hour of greatest peril. At this moment in history the British were imperially "brainwashed": there was barely any pause in drumming the "imperial theme". Novels, poems, oratorios, plays, and even seemingly scholarly histories promoted the imperial dream of a Christian British Empire on which the sun would never set.

Thus it was that the imperial-minded historian and myth-maker, seeking to implant the "glorious deeds of Empire" in the hearts of the young, seized upon the "Elegy" episode — itself so full of British sentiment — transferred it to a more dramatic moment and made it, in almost every re-telling, a symbol of British imperial determination. Again "sentiment took the bit in her teeth, and the waning glamour of Wolfe's achievement blazed up [anew as] the flames were fed with the fizzling fat of fiction." What better example of imperial dedication could there be than Wolfe — enduring sickness, facing death, saving a nation's honour — summing up his life's credo in Gray's immortal lines. Eventually, school children well into this century, using the popular *Royal Reader No. V*, would be forced to memorize all or part of the "Elegy" and read Warburton's highly romanticized version of the "Siege of Quebec" that stood next to it. And if they remembered nothing else, they would always remember those unforgettable lines: "Now, gentlemen, I would rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec."

Though they probably did not know it, what they were reading was largely propaganda. It was not Warburton's intention merely to recount an historical event but to instil a sense of pride in Britain's imperial destiny. At the Battle of Quebec, he claimed, "one of the most momentous political questions that have ever moved the human race was decided . . . When a few English and French emigrants first landed among the Virginian and Canadian forests it began: when the British flag was hoisted on the citadel of Quebec it was decided. From that day Providence pointed out to the Anglo-Saxon race that to them was henceforth intrusted the destiny of the New World".

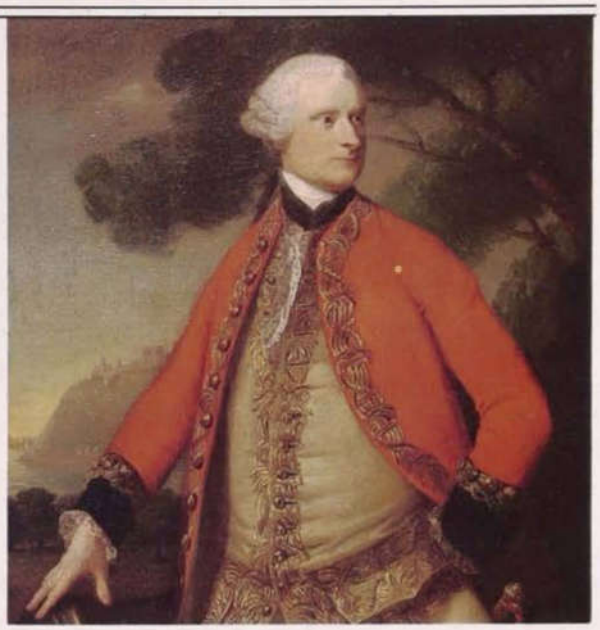
The "Elegy" episode, therefore, was for most historians the perfect imperial image. That is why the half-remembered conversation, repeated by several people including Sir Walter Scott, became accepted as fact; why an event which, according to the first teller, took place on "the day before the attack", was transferred to the night of the Battle; and why the suggestion of a "gentleman reading Gray's 'Elegy' to General Wolfe" became the affirmation of a "General with much feeling" repeating the whole of Gray's "Elegy" to all the officers around him. As one later historian commented, there has hardly been another story "in the whole range of history . . . which has undergone from pen to pen such fantastic permutations as this".

Though the imperial urge did not suddenly die, and would manifest itself in various ways for many years, by the first decades of the twentieth century imperialism was a very tarnished grail. What destroyed it altogether was World War I: from that moment, which saw Canada as a partner in the Imperial War Cabinet, to the Statute of Westminster in 1931, the path led towards an autonomous nationalism. Therefore, the need to glorify the Empire and romanticize its heroes was no longer as strong. More important, the story of Wolfe became — as the stories of the arctic explorers have lately become — a "Canadian" story. As such, it was not only the story of Wolfe but of Montcalm as well: and, in the spirit of fairness and friendliness, it was no longer acceptable to glorify the victory. For Canadians Wolfe could never be a kind of Davy Crockett; we do not mythologize as the Americans do.

Thus no longer do we read: "Strategist of rapier cunning, soldier of superb command,/ Wolfe undaunted as a whirlwind, met and smote them with his band." And no more do we hear him reciting Gray's "Elegy" as he makes his way to a martyr's death. The Romance of Empire has given way to the Reality of Nationhood: and no doubt, as with all changes, though much is gained something is surely lost. ♦

Dr. Moyles, a professor of English at the University of Alberta, is co-author, with Doug Owram, of "Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities: British Views of Canada, 1880-1914", published by the University of Toronto Press, 1988.

QUEBEC AFTER THE BATTLE



By Stephen and Elizabeth USHERWOOD

". . . a rich and most useful colony to Great Britain . . ."

When both General James Wolfe and the Marquis de Montcalm were mortally wounded on the Plains of Abraham in September 1759, the fate of the French in Quebec City had not been decided. Wolfe's second-in-command, General Robert Monckton, was seriously wounded, and in his place Brigadier George Townshend parleyed, hoping, if he offered good terms, to secure a capitulation. In this he succeeded; the French forces marched out with the honours of war and were repatriated. Monckton recovered, and with Townshend, sailed for England before ice closed the St. Lawrence, bringing with them the body of Wolfe for burial at the church of St. Alphege, near his home at Greenwich. They were accompanied by the greater part of the army, leaving a small force under Brigadier James Murray, who had commanded the left wing in the battle, to defend Quebec against possible French counter-attacks.

Murray possessed all the gifts required for the post: high spirits, a lively intelligence, good manners and a courteous tongue. The fifth son of Lord Elibank, like many younger sons he chose a military career. At thirty-seven, having seen action in the West Indies, Flanders, Brittany, Cartagena, Ostend, L'Orient and Rochfort, he was appointed to the command of a brigade on the Quebec expedition, at the instigation of Wolfe, whose esteem Murray had gained by his courage and enterprise at the siege of Louisbourg in 1758.

Within the walls of Quebec the British found many buildings damaged by gunfire. One of their cannon balls had gouged out a hollow in the floor of the Ursulines' church, and here Montcalm's staff had buried his body. Amid all this misery those who had suffered irreparable loss soon recovered their composure. As a British officer noted, women of the upper classes invited the conquerors into their houses, and to every commiseration would reply *"Fortune de guerre"*. Soon French children were enjoying the fun of teaching their language to the English.

The activities of the various orders of women religious made a deep impression on the British. There were thirty-six nuns at the Hotel Dieu Convent, who had until recently been in good circumstances, but having lost their house by fire, were in debt for rebuilding; their special care was for the sick, and during the fighting they had taken in the wounded from both sides. At the Convent of the Ursulines there were thirty-eight nuns who devoted themselves to the education of girls from the upper and middle classes. The Filles de la Congregation, a poor order with only four sisters, taught reading and writing to young girls of humble birth. At the General Hospital just outside the town there were thirty-three nuns normally nursing thirty incurable invalids. An English officer, sent to guard them just after the capture of Quebec, finding these sisters were also nursing sick and wounded from both armies, declared:

> When our poor fellows were ill and ordered to be removed from their odious regimental hospital to this general receptacle, they were indeed rendered

National Trust, Quebec House, Westerham

Previous page: Brigadier James Murray, from the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London.
Above: Quebec under the French regime.

inexpressibly happy. Each patient had his bed, with curtains, allotted to him, and a nurse to attend him. Every sick or wounded officer had an apartment to himself, and is attended by one of these religious sisters, who in general are young, handsome, courteous, rigidly reserved, and very respectful.

The aged Mother Superior, whose nuns came from the best families in Canada, sent this officer a note inviting him to an English breakfast. It was not recognizable as such, but he "fared exceedingly well and passed near two hours most agreeably".

In the first winter the British suffered severely from cold and from scurvy, known to be due to a dietary deficiency, for which a palatable remedy was hard to find. The officers drank beer made with spruce buds and twigs; it was effective, but they could not persuade their men to do the same. Before the snows had melted, Murray set his men to work strengthening the defences. He expected a counterattack from the direction of Montreal, and soon reports came in of an approaching force three times larger than his own, led by the Chevalier de Lévis (later a Marshal of France). With great daring Murray left a light guard of three hundred men in the city and mounted an attack while the enemy were still advancing. Though outnumbered, his superiority in artillery saved the day. When he withdrew, having suffered heavy casualties, the enemy did not attempt a pursuit, but dug ramparts to protect themselves against possible artillery fire from the town walls. When Murray ordered more guns to be brought from the lower town, they had to be man-handled up the steep streets, and, to the astonishment of other ranks, officers put their shoulders to the wheels with the rest, but they were inspired by a leader who, like Wolfe, broke rules when circumstances demanded it, risking a battle in the open against superior numbers in order to unnerve the enemy. Suddenly, in the pause that followed this second battle of Quebec, the cry went up from the look-outs on the river side: "The Navy's here!" The frigate *Lowestoffe* had sailed in, and the soldiers cheered till they were hoarse. Her news: that *Vanguard,* a ship of the line, and *Diana,* another frigate, would arrive in a few days. With *Diana, Lowestoffe* destroyed the little fleet attending the besiegers and carrying their supplies, causing them to order an immediate retreat. Murray set out in pursuit, but could not overtake them.

A summer campaign to complete the conquest of Canada was now possible; Jeffrey Amherst, the commander in North America, marched on Montreal from Lake Ontario; Brigadier Haviland came from Lake Champlain; Murray's force joined them. The French

were under the command of the Marquis de Vaudreuil, who, as governor of Quebec, had hampered Montcalm throughout the siege, and then escaped. Amherst was the last to arrive, having had a perilous passage through rapids, where eighty-four of his men were drowned. On 8 September 1760, Vaudreuil, his position hopeless, surrendered on similar terms to those imposed by Townshend, though this time all combatants had to lay down their arms, under a promise not to serve again. The French troops were given passage to France in British ships.

During the next year many highly-placed members of the French community left. In Quebec, Murray, appointed military governor, quickly restored the morale of the remaining population and drew up plans for their future prosperity. In June 1762 he dispatched a most comprehensive report to the home government:

> Since the conquest I can with greatest truth assert that the troops have lived with the inhabitants in a harmony unexampled even at home. In the winter which immediately followed the reduction of this country, when from the calamities of war and bad harvest the inhabitants of these lower parts were exposed to all the horrors of famine, the officers of every rank, even the lowest, generously contributed towards alleviating the distress of the unfortunate Canadians by a large subscription. The British merchants and traders readily and cheerfully assisted in this good work; even the poor soldiers threw in their mite and all gave a day's provisions or a day's pay in the month towards the conquered . . . convinced these poor deluded people how grossly they had been imposed upon . . . the daily instances of lenity, the impartial justice which had been administered, so far beyond what they had formerly experienced, have so altered their opinion with regard to us . . . that, far from having the least design to emigrate into any other of the French colonies, their greatest dread is lest they should meet with the fate of the Acadians and be torn from their native country.

He went on to describe the Canadians of European origin as divided into four groups: the nobility and gentry; the clergy; the merchants and traders; and the peasantry or *habitants*. Natives were dealt with under two heads, "Savages of the North Shore" and "Savages of the South Shore". The words "sauvage" and "savage" did not at that time imply ferocity, but were nearer in meaning to the modern term "native". Of the nobility he says:

> [They were] in general poor, except such as had commands in distant posts, where they usually made a fortune in three or four years.

They looked down on, while remaining indebted to, the merchants and traders, who were, for the most part, involved in the fur trade. Among the clergy and

The church of Notre Dame and other buildings in Quebec were in ruins after the siege.

National Archives of Canada

Marquis de Vaudreuil: A hopeless position led to surrender.

members of the religious orders, senior posts were usually filled by men sent out from France. The peasantry are described as:

> . . . a strong healthy race. Plain in their dress, virtuous in their morals and temperate in their living. They are in general extremely ignorant, for the former government would never suffer a printing press in the country; few can read or write, and all received implicitly for truth the many arrant falsehoods and atrocious lies industriously handed among them by those who were in power.

Aware that much depended on arresting the decline in population caused by the war, Murray noted that, while the age of consent was eighteen, the age of majority was twenty-five. He recommended that this should be lowered to twenty-one, so that heirs could inherit, and build homes for themselves sooner. The old custom was that, on the death of a *seigneur,* his eldest son inherited half his land, and the remainder was divided among his other children, but if this division left portions too small to support a family, the siblings were obliged to sell to one another. Many of the original settlers had come from Normandy, a province famous for its litigiousness, and their descendants revelled in elaborate instruments and procedures. As a remedy Murray suggested "a short well-digested code". To raise the birth rate he proposed to dispense with the laws on consanguinity; the requirement that strangers should produce evidence that they had no spouse living; and the prohibition of mixed marriages between Catholics and Protestants; then, Canadian women being extremely prolific, the next twenty years could be expected to produce "a vast increase of people".

Murray attributed the shortage of grain not to the infertility of the soil, but to price-fixing by the Intendants, which enabled them to sell part of each harvest to the French West Indies at a profit and, when grain supplies in Canada ran short, resell the rest at an enhanced price. The perquisites of all officials had formed a very considerable addition to their incomes, but, without knowing the cost of living, it is almost impossible to evaluate the figures given. Montcalm, in one of his letters home, says: "Everything is horribly dear, and I shall find it hard to make ends meet with the 25,000 francs the King gives me".

In addition to their salaries the governors of Quebec, Montreal and Trois Rivières received respectively 11,050, 7,500 and 7,300 francs for their garrisons, which did not exist. The town mayors received 250 francs in lieu of two barrels of gunpowder for these non-existent garrisons. For every beaver skin exported, the governor of New France received a toll, amounting to 6,000 francs a year, from the French East India Company — which held the monopoly for beaver; nevertheless Murray, going through captured documents, concluded that government expenditure had been very moderate, not rising to 2 million francs a year until the outbreak of the 1744-48 war, and after that, running between 3 million and 4 million. Much of the colony's business had been financed by bills of exchange drawn on France, and again figures in the report show how costly defence became during the Seven Years' War: 1756, 8 million; 1757, 12 million; 1758, 24 million; and 1759, 30 million.

Looking to the future, and the possibility of improving revenues, Murray noted that the Canadians "seem thoroughly reconciled to British-made corn spirits". A moderate duty of sixpence a gallon on them and a shilling on rum would therefore not reduce consumption. "Though the Canadians are not in general given to drunkenness, men, women and children are used to drink a certain quantity of strong liquors, the severity of the climate probably having introduced the practice". If these duties were brought in, the report points out, there would be smuggling by the lakes all the year round, since, when they were frozen, sleighs could be used. This would have to be stopped, and further precautions taken on the lower reaches of the St. Lawrence, where there were many unfrequented bays and creeks.

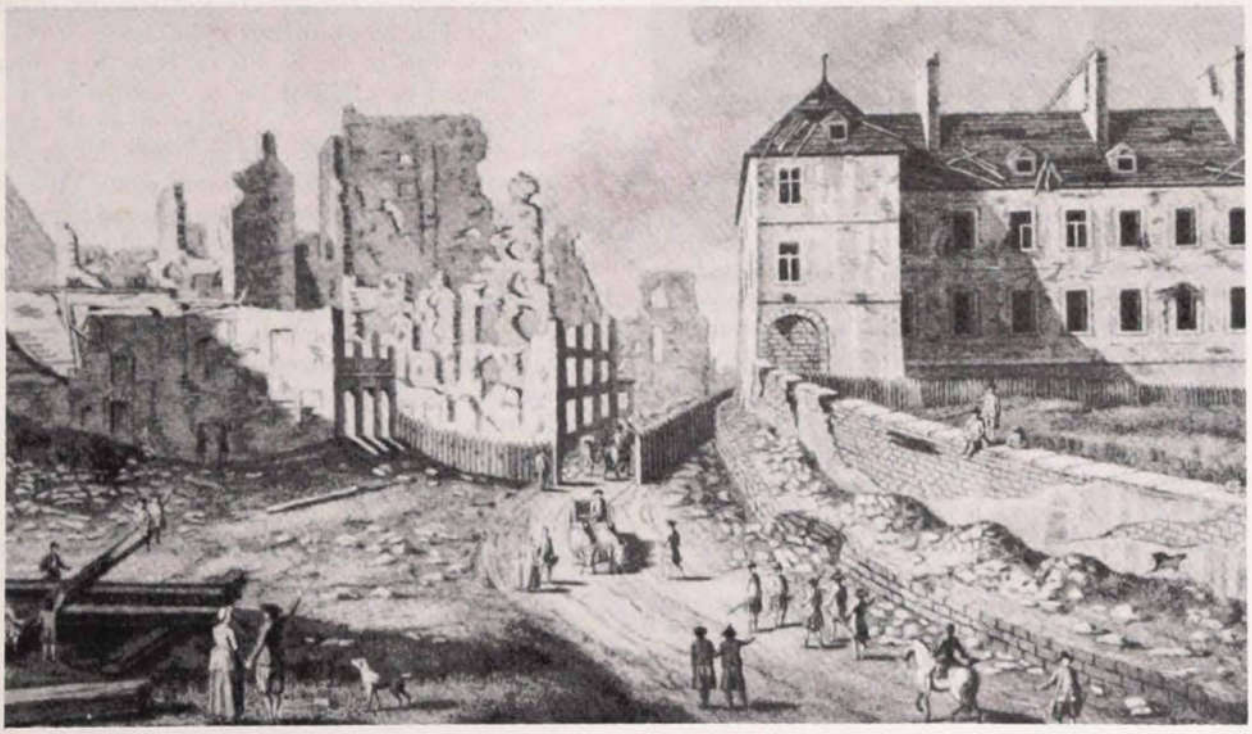
For the first time since the Revolution of 1688 a large and devoutly Catholic population had come under

British rule. Clearly it would be inexpedient to submit their religion to the intolerance to which it was exposed in the British Isles, but in Murray's view there should be limits to toleration; beneath his smooth phrases lay considerable hostility; the French-born priests would not, he considered, be reconciled at the change of government and would "drop off by degrees"; then, if the whole priesthood were Canadian-born, "everyone would soon be satisfied". The clergy's hold was still great, but getting less, "every day someone disputes the tithes with their curé". Bishops formerly moved clergy from one post to another at their pleasure and His Majesty might do the same "for the sake of keeping them in proper subjection".

The Cathedral, which served an extensive parish, had been so badly damaged by artillery that the population could not attend Mass there, going instead to one of the churches belonging to the religious orders, and "to assist the people in rebuilding their Great Church would much ingratiate their new Masters with them." At the same time his attitude to the Jesuits was distinctly hostile:

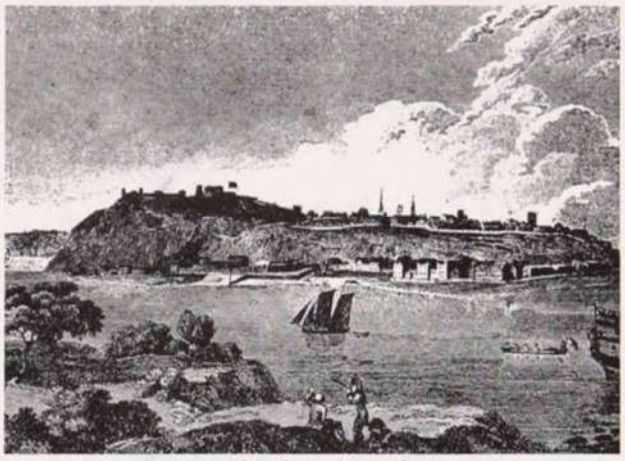
> [They] are neither loved nor esteemed in general, and this Order may be easily removed, whenever the Government shall think proper, without giving offence. Out of part of their estate a sufficient provision might be made for the bishopric and chapter, which would ease the Crown of further expense on that

Above: Brigadier Murray strikes a warlike pose. Below: Ruins of the Bishop's House, Quebec, after the battle.



head . . . They possess a large commodious house, a handsome chapel and a spacious garden within the upper town. The house and chapel suffered a good deal from our artillery, but might easily be repaired. No other place in the town being so proper, it has, and is still, made use of as a magazine of provisions; for this reason it was necessary to dislodge the Fathers the first winter lest their turbulent and intriguing genius should prompt them to play some trick, which might have proved fatal in the then critical situation of affairs of which perhaps they could have easily compassed, had they been suffered to reside in the house. After the capture of Montreal they were readmitted, are conveniently lodged in one wing of it, and have freely consented to His Majesty's making use of the remainder.

These dangerous missionaries, numbering only nine, had made many converts, including a community of



A view of Quebec in Murray's time.

Hurons, now settled at Jeune Lorette, nine miles from Quebec, who were "the most civilised of all the Indians . . . all Roman Catholics and a decent well-behaved people." Their forbears had been a large and warlike tribe living on the shores of Lake Erie. Now they dwelt in good houses, cultivating their own land, living on the produce, and in the hunting season going into the woods to trap on their own account, or buy furs from the more remote Indians. Some of the elders had refused to learn French, but their young people spoke it "moderately well". They had "a neat chapel" and their attendance at Mass (Murray prefers to call it "Divine Worship") showed "a punctuality and decorum worthy of imitation by more enlightened people".

The communities of nuns, despite their services to the army and the esteem in which they were held by the population, were not to be encouraged; Murray noted with satisfaction:

> . . . the narrowness of their circumstances will probably prevent their being filled up so easily as in former times. When the Canadians become a little more reconciled to British customs and government, it will not be amiss, under colour of serving these Communities in their distressed situation, to restrict the admission of any under a certain sum. This regulation, with another fixing a certain age under which no vows may be taken, would probably soon reform the worst abuses of such Institutions.

Last among the Catholic religious mentioned were the Recollets, mendicant friars who had served as army chaplains, possessing nothing of their own except a house and a garden in the upper town. To them the people were "cool" and so they would "of themselves seek a better living somewhere else". He found few Huguenots, but having no doubt they would wish to remain, recommended setting up a church for them with a French clergyman of "sound sense and good character" in the hope that they would convert the Catholics.

Of the aboriginal inhabitants, the Esquimaux, being unwilling to change in the slightest degree, were heartily disliked. Murray calls them:

> . . . the wildest and most untamable of any . . . They never dress their food, but eat fish rotted in the sun and drink the oil it produces. Travellers represent them as hardy, active and expert navigators. In the summer they come with their whole families in chaloupes to fish in the Straits of Belle Isle; these [chaloupes] they leave in the bays and go out to a considerable distance in canoes made of skins wherein they sew themselves up. Their clothes and the sails of their vessels are made of the skins of beasts. They are reckoned treacherous, and have had many encounters with the French and Canadians employed in the fisheries in those parts. They are much fairer than the Indians and are bearded. Their language is not understood, but a few words they make use of nearly resemble the dialect of the most northern European nations. A few here have trafficked with them and made a considerable advantage by it, but they never agreed well together. Any trade with the Esquimaux however must be precarious; the coast is difficult of access, the season for navigation short, and the risks too great to entice adventurers. They have never been known to come this side of La Forteau.

By contrast, in the vast area between Labrador and the Saguenay River the Indians, mostly Montagnais, or Monsonis, were "the mildest and most tractable of

savages", and some of them were in communication with the Hudson Bay Indians. On the right bank of the St. Lawrence the tribes were much more fragmented. Micmacs lived along the bays on the Gulf; Kanibas and Malicites in the valley of the St. John River; and Abenaquis, once settled round Narantsouac and Panouanski, now "wandered about" on the left bank. The languages of all these tribes were very similar. The Abenaquis, numbering about 15,000 families, in return for "powder, shot, vermilion and other trifles" from the French, had provided them in 1759 with 600 warriors, who also received war clothing and provisions. "The greatest concourse of back, or remote, Indians" was to be seen at the Montreal fur markets. Murray, realising that the conquest of Canada had broken up the vast network for the collection and sale of furs, stated: "That part of the fur trade which the Quebec Government enjoyed must remain irrevocably hers". The French East India Company had paid £4 a pound for the green or winter beaver and £1.10s. for the parchment or summer one, but already fur traders from New York and Philadelphia had taken over the operations formerly in French hands.

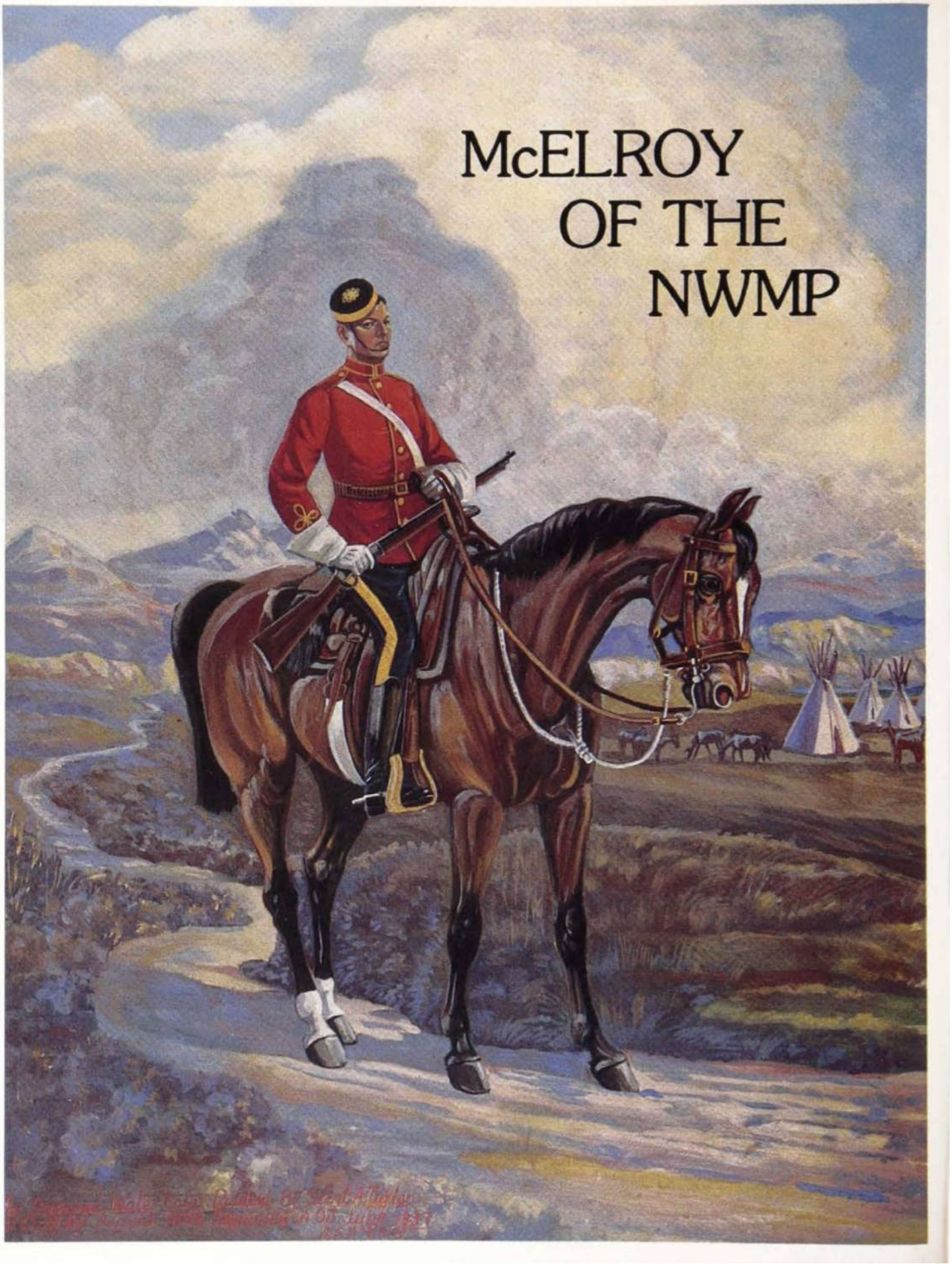
The Royal Navy was always in need of new supplies of cordage, sailcloth and masts, their main sources in the Baltic being liable to interruption for political reasons. Murray therefore reported that it would be easy to promote the growing of hemp and flax, especially if German and Russian experts were brought in. The crops could be prepared for manufacture by women and children during the winter months and sent to British weavers. Masts could be supplied "at a much cheaper and easier rate" from Chambli "than from New England, where they had to be rafted and many are lost on a rapid river". From Chambli there was at the proper season easy water carriage all the way to Quebec.

The most hopeful source of new wealth in Murray's view were the fisheries, which the French had not attempted to develop. The cod caught on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland was reputedly inferior to that caught in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and fishing there could begin a month earlier and continue a month later. Whales could also be pursued with less risk and expense in the river than anywhere else, and provide an immense quantity of oil and whalebone for export. In the same area there was "a prodigious abundance" of seal and sea cow. On the coast of Labrador there were rivers abounding in excellent salmon that would be of great profit to British traders.

In his final paragraph Murray once more assured the home government that the Canadians, if convinced that they would not be moved from their homes, and if left to enjoy the free exercise of their religion, would soon become faithful and good subjects, and the country they inhabited would "in a short time prove a rich and most useful colony to Great Britain". ♦

Jeffrey, Lord Amherst: The warrior in a contemplative mood.

British historical writer Stephen Usherwood writes: "During our researches into eighteenth-century history my wife and I were given access to the report, in manuscript, sent by the first British governor of Quebec, General James Murray, to the ministers of George III, in 1762, in which he describes conditions in Canada during the first two years following the fall of Quebec". Usherwood has written extensively on historical subjects and contributed to such magazines as "History Today".


McELROY
OF THE
NWMP

The memoirs of George E. McElroy

On a blustery March day in 1898, I stepped down from a colonist car at the CPR station at Regina carrying all my worldly possessions. These consisted of a rolled blanket tied with a strap and a red gin box that had been filled with grub when I left home back East several days earlier. Now, all that remained were a few crusts of stale bread and the picked-over carcass of a tough old rooster who had once been king of our barnyard.

My God, but Regina was a wind-swept, desolate place! All I could see were a few wooden buildings around which the bone-chilling wind howled incessantly. At first, the railway station seemed to be deserted but, after a few moments, I noticed an authoritative-looking figure headed in my direction. He was resplendent in Mounted Police uniform which consisted of a hair seal cap with a yellow bag on the side, a massive frogged buffalo hide coat with brass buttons, blue breeches with broad yellow cavalry stripes down the sides and highly polished boots and spurs. He also wore white buckskin gauntlets and carried a riding crop. This was Sergeant Biff Heffernan whose duty was to meet all trains and intercept any suspicious or undesirable visitors.

After nervously explaining that I'd come to Regina with the hope of joining the force, he escorted me to the NWMP Barracks. There, after an hour of careful questioning as to my personal particulars, education and motives, I was given a medical examination and, finally, was enrolled as Regimental Number 3305 Constable George McElroy, NWMP.

Although I'd heard stories about the NWMP since early boyhood, the first time I'd ever actually seen members of the famous outfit was in Ottawa at a parade of the contingent which had recently returned from England where it had participated in Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. It was a scene I never forgot. Surely the Force never turned out a better-looking body of men. I made up my mind then and there that I wanted to join them.

No one in the family opposed this ambition. In fact, the general feeling was that the sooner I achieved it the better. I was the eldest of a family of three boys and one girl. When I was eight, my mother died and my father re-married. Although the second marriage was primarily an inexpensive way of obtaining a housekeeper and nursemaid, Father lost no time in begetting a second family of two more boys and three girls. As time went on it became ever more essential that the older chicks leave the nest in order to make room for the younger ones. Consequently, when I expressed a wish to join the NWMP, [Father] was more than willing to stake me to a one-way ticket via colonist car to Regina and even give me twenty-five dollars spending money. My step-mother and other female relatives packed the gin box with grub and I was sent on my way.

After being attested, I was sent to the Post barber shop where Constable Bannerman, the barber, saved some of my eight-inch locks and hung them on display to show the old hands just how bad a rookie can sometimes be. Next, I drew my uniform and kit but after donning my fatigue uniform in the barracks and looking at myself in the mirror, I had a shock. "Ye gods! What a sight!" Nothing fitted.

I soon learned that a buck had to pay a stiff price to look smart. The pay was fifty to seventy-five cents a day during the first five years of service. The brown fatigue jacket always had to be tailored and breast pockets added at a cost of about three dollars. The forage cap usually needed to be cut down at a cost of about fifty cents. Tailoring the breeches and serge tunic might cost another seven or eight dollars and the riding boots had to be fitted to the leg, boned, lined and the heels fixed.

There were also a number of desirable items of clothing for which there was no issue. Long slacks with a wide yellow cavalry stripe down each leg cost eight

George E. McElroy was born 16 September 1877 at Richmond, Ontario, and died in August 1945 at Ottawa. He joined the North West Mounted Police in 1898 and served at Regina, Estevan and Calgary. He volunteered for service in the Boer War and upon his return to Canada was given a medical discharge. McElroy became a newspaper sketch artist, cartoonist and commercial artist. In the 1930s he was commissioned by RCMP Commissioner Sir James MacBrien to produce a series of paintings depicting the early history of the force. A number of these works are reproduced with this article. The paintings are now in the RCMP Museum in Regina.

Constable McElroy is shown wearing the pea-jacket for which he had to pay $25. The painting by George McElroy on page 16 shows a North West Mounted Police constable in the summer dress of the 1880s. (RCMP Museum, Regina).

dollars at the Post tailor shop. Wellington boots were fifteen dollars, an English Melton pea-jacket, twenty-five dollars; buckskin gauntlets, three dollars; and a Stetson hat, seventeen dollars and fifty cents, duty free.

Nothing compelled a recruit to buy these extras — nothing but the desire to be as well turned out as the next fellow. Also, when you had them, they increased your chances of getting crack jobs such as Governor's or Commissioner's orderly. But they cost quite a wad considering that a recruit's monthly pay was only fifteen dollars. Other expenses included a dollar for messing. This went towards the purchase of butter and other luxuries not included in the rations. Canteen profits were also used to supplement the government issues so that in the mess hall food was always varied and plentiful.

After messing, came laundry — one or two dollars. Then milk, about the same. After every pay parade Jim Blake would be waiting with his hand out. His cut depended on how hungry you had been in the evenings when off duty. Jim Blake officiated over the Sergeant's Mess kitchen. Whenever you were hungry, you went to the back door and gave three knocks. You would then be admitted and permitted to dine on minced ham, Crosse & Blackwell's pickles, bread and butter. No matter how much you ate, the price was always a quarter. The money, of course, all went towards Jim's retirement fund. On pay days, by the time you reached the barracks from the orderly room, you were lucky if you had two or three dollars left.

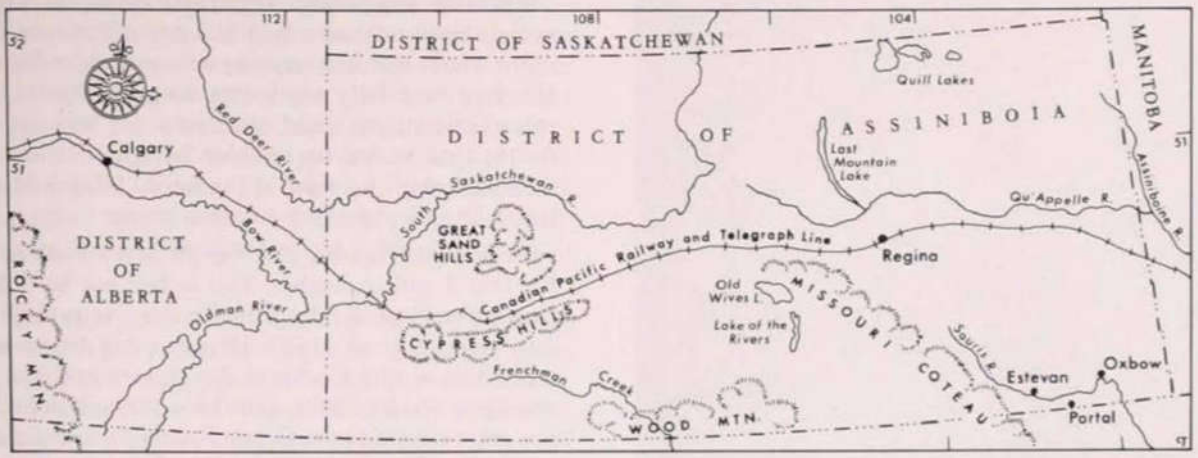
Reveille was at five-thirty in the summer. This was followed by stables, breakfast and then exercise drills and rides. The riding instructor was Sergeant Church while Sergeant Nichols and Sergeant Stuart taught foot and arms drill. All these Non Coms were crackerjacks at their jobs and how they could call you down! If you ever thought you knew anything or could do anything, you had forgotten it by the time they had got through with you. Still, their methods got results.

The one Non Com I had no luck with was Corporal Bill Emery. You could get pegged by him on the slightest provocation and it was always expensive. On one occasion, I was fined ten dollars and awarded twenty-eight days confinement to barracks. If you got a dose like that in April it meant you wouldn't get a pass until the end of May and you filled in your off duty time by shovelling manure, washing dishes and doing other chores reserved for defaulters.

The Sergeant Majors at Regina were Hines and Deressiter. Hines was strict and just, but had a heart as big as a Stetson hat. Deressiter was a fine type of Irish gentleman and a crackerjack of a soldier, but he once pegged me for getting tangled up with three male ponies under his supervision — another ten bones and twenty-eight days CB!

I still have a mental picture of Sergeant Church on his horse, Tempest, coming towards the chapel from the riding school. Tempest was a beautiful, golden chestnut with showy white stockings and a blaze on his forehead. He was a gloriously stylish animal with such an erect carriage, he appeared to stand about twenty hands high. He was well-named Tempest for he had the same awe-inspiring effect as a threatening prairie thunderstorm. Sad to relate, Tempest never lived to become a fully-fledged trained Police horse. Just as he was nearing the end of his recruit training, he was stricken by pneumonia and never recovered. Not long afterward his master met the same fate. Sergeant Church mourned the death of that horse right up until his own death.

In the NWMP, men were recruited from many countries and walks of life. There were gentlemen rankers, remittance men, cowpunchers, farm hands, clerks, factory workers, black sheep from the British aristocracy, university graduates and cattlemen who had travelled with trail herds from Texas to the railheads in Missouri and Kansas. But when Sergeant Nichols and the other



instructors got through with them, they looked and behaved as though they had all come from the same mold. They were Mounted Police and damn proud of it. Sergeant Nichols always used to tell us, "When you walk into a place to make an arrest, bog your heels down and stick your chest out like a buck pigeon. Try to act as though you had a mortgage on half the town and owned the bloody waterworks!"

All recruits hated church parade because you had to gild the lily for it. You had to be spotless for parade at any time but super-spotless for church parade. Nevertheless, it was worth all the fuss and preparation.

The parson who officiated at church parades came out from town but there were rarely ever any other outsiders present. Nevertheless, the chapel would be filled to capacity with Mounted Police and Constable Billy Johnston used to ride the organ, spurs and all.

All of the Mounted Police horses were Western bred. None came from any point east of Manitoba and few from there. Most of our re-mounts came from the Cochrane Ranch west of Calgary, High River, and the Lawson Ranch in the vicinity of Maple Creek. The horses were all born on the open range and would be four or five years old by the time they were rounded up. No doubt wranglers on their home ranches tamed them enough to get saddles on them and perhaps even rode them a few times but they were still pretty wild and unruly by the time they were purchased by the Police.

I remember one hammer-headed cayuse who bucked the Police wrangler clean off the Post and landed him about a mile away at the hog ranch west of the dump. This cayuse then wriggled out of a double cinch rimfire saddle without breaking or undoing the cinches. This particular animal was very low at the withers like a mule and somewhat wedge-shaped. It was next to impossible to cinch a saddle on him so that it would stay put. He'd slip out of it every time.

No Police horse was ever allowed to go barefoot except on herd. They all had to be shoed and branded with the MP brand and their regimental number. Also, their tails had to be thinned and butted in accordance with Police regulations. Charles Russell, the cowboy artist, wrote in one of his books that cowmen and Indians could always identify Police horses at great distances because of their butted tails. Another beauty treatment was to thin out their manes. This was done by pulling and it was quite a trick to pull a heavy mane so that it looked even and natural. The manes of officers' chargers were always dressed to the off side, while the manes of the cayuses ridden by other ranks were dressed to the near side.

Caring for and schooling these nervous, young rookie re-mounts was a time-consuming task which was the responsibility of about eight or ten selected individuals. These men had to have plenty of horse savvy, a natural liking for the animals, great patience, a certain looseness in the saddle and a fine sense of balance. Much patient schooling was necessary before the re-mounts learned good manners and all the gaits and drills. It took about two years before they became fully trained Police horses. Quite as much effort went into the training of the horses as with the training of the men. It was a firm Police rule that the horses must always be given the best care, food and treatment possible and no mercy was shown to any beggar who disobeyed it.

There were about two hundred horses at Regina when I was there. Crowfoot was the one I remember best. He was a showpiece and he was supposed to have served in the Force since the Rebellion of 1885. If that was true, he must have been at least twenty years old in 1898. This was long past the age when most Police horses were struck off strength as time-expired, but Crowfoot had received special treatment. He continued to remain at the Depot as an honoured guest. He never did a tap of work except that sometimes he

Three unidentified Mounties of McElroy's day and a "Paper Collar Johnny", photographed at Edmonton. The seated constable has enhanced his uniform with non-issue Wellington boots and gauntlets.

would deign to serve as a mount for some of the young ladies who lived at the Post, but he only did that if he happened to feel like it. He spent most of his time on herd or in the stables plotting mischief. Crowfoot was never mean or vicious, but he had all the horse devils that ever existed wrapped up in his old hide. His most famous stunt was breaking up the watering parade.

At that time there was no water in the stables and the horses all had to be taken to the trough near the main gate. Each man led two horses. One crisp, frosty morning when the cayuses were all as skittish as a cage full of chipmunks, a prankster appeared in the doorway of the nearby mess kitchen and shouted, "Sugar, Crowfoot!"

Crowfoot's heels went up and, lifting his tail, he trumpeted a resounding series of vulgar blasts as he made a bee-line for the proffered sugar. The constable who had been leading him wound up in the ditch and, in no time, the orderly watering parade was suddenly turned into a hell-roaring stampede with horses bucking and rampaging all over the lot. Thereafter, anyone guilty of offering sugar to Crowfoot on parade would be fined and handed a stiff dose of CB.

Buckskin was another horse at Regina. He was a homely brute but had a beautiful coat. Grooming him in the winter was like combing out the Golden Fleece. His hair was fully six inches long. Buckskin had remarkable strength and endurance. He was famous for the time he had been ridden for ninety miles and then bucked off his rider at the finish. I didn't blame him a bit. He should have done it sooner.

Regimental Number 21457 is the only horse's number that I can remember. This is because he didn't have a name like all the others. He was always respectfully referred to as 21457. He was a big brown rat-tailed animal with Cochrane Ranch earmarks and he could give you a rougher, more bone-shaking ride than any other cayuse at the Depot. Riding Instructor Sergeant Church used him as a torture horse. If a recruit was ever unfortunate enough to get "in Dutch" with Sergeant Church, he would find himself paired with 21457 on the next ride or turn out. By this means, the Sergeant could punish wrongdoers without going to all the trouble of laying charges and having to appear at the orderly room to give evidence. It was much easier and simpler to let 21457 dish out the punishment.

Sergeant Nichols used to tell us recruits that we would not have a wet-nurse like him around forever. If we had any brains and showed any gumption, we would eventually be posted to a detachment. Being on detachment is the ideal life for a buck policeman if you are fortunate enough to be sent to a good one. I was lucky and was sent to Estevan.

At one time, Estevan had been an important post in the charge of an officer with a goodly number of Non Coms, constables and horses. But when I arrived, the establishment only called for a sergeant, a constable and three horses. Sergeant Bryce was the sergeant and I was to be the buck. The nearest neighbouring Police post was at Portal on the international boundary line. Portal only had a Mounted Police veterinary sergeant who, when he was absent on duty, had to be replaced by the buck from Estevan. At Portal there was plenty of immigration work, passing stock and patrolling the international boundary. The boundary was marked by a ploughed strip about fifty feet wide on each side of the line, which served as a fireguard. The nearest NWMP post to the east was Oxbow and to the west, Wood Mountain.

Riding boundary patrol was a lonely, often monotonous duty, freezing cold in winter and blazing hot in summer. Often you would ride for days with no company but that of the horse.

One day in March when I was on patrol east of Portal, I noticed a clearly marked trail made by a horse and sleigh which crossed the ploughed fireguard. It was hard to judge just how long beforehand the trail had been made but I decided to follow it anyway. Some

hours later, I caught up to my suspected smuggler. This man had planned to go into the pickle business and for this he needed vinegar so he travelled via horse and sleigh down into Uncle Sam's territory to purchase a barrel of acetic acid. Probably he could get it there a few cents cheaper or perhaps the supplier was closer than any in Canada. But whatever the reason and regardless of any personal feelings I may have had, clearly, he was breaking the law so I had to take him in.

Incidents such as this made up the bulk of Police work. They occurred in connection with stock, game laws, timber, immigration, farming, mining, trapping, fighting forest fires and even civilian births, marriages, sickness and deaths. Desperate encounters, Hollywood style, with outlaws and gun-slingers were few and far between.

The horses at Estevan were Tom, Paddy and another Laddie. They were kept at a livery stable in town and, as I was the only buck, it was my job to look after them. Paddy and Laddie were matched greys while Tom was a big, handsome six-year-old with a beautiful dark brown coat. He was a perfect example of an ideal Police saddle horse but, for some reason, Sergeant Bryce gave me strict orders not to ride him. Tom was to be used along with Laddie to pull the buckboard and Paddy was to be the saddle horse. The sergeant didn't volunteer any explanation for this strange order and, by now, I had been in the force long enough to have the sense not to ask. Later, I learned the reason from the man who owned the livery stable.

It seems that Tom had once been used as a saddle horse, but had developed bad habits. He had put both a sergeant and a constable in hospital by rearing up and falling over backwards on top of them. In each case, the saddle horn had smashed the rider's pelvis. Even so, pairing a beautiful animal like Tom with Laddie just didn't seem right to me. But neither did I want to get pegged for disobeying an order. However, the next time Sergeant Bryce was away from the post on duty, I automatically became acting detachment commander. My first act in this appointment was to order myself to ride Tom. You always obey the last order.

When I first saddled Tom, he appeared surprised, but offered no serious objections. No doubt though, he was turning over in his mind all the things he was going to do to me if I ever dared to get on his back. Just before leading him out into the stable yard, I put on a pair of heavy teamster's gauntlets and went across the street to the hotel. There, I obtained a large ginger ale bottle filled with scalding hot water. When the livery stable owner saw me getting ready to mount, he nearly had a fit. "My God, kid!" he exclaimed. "You're not going to try to ride that murderous brute! Why, he'll kill you!"

Tiny Marshall, NWMP horse wrangler at Calgary, a champion rider and roper.

I replied that we'd have to see about that. I then proceeded to mount in the usual fashion except that I held the reins in my right hand. Being left-handed, I gripped the ginger ale bottle with that hand. The heavy gauntlet prevented me from burning my fingers. At first, nothing much happened except that Tom refused to stand well but it wasn't until I urged him to move forward that the fun began. He shook his head as though he found the head collar objectionable. Then he started to dance and reared up on his hind legs. The third time he tried this stunt, he would have crashed over backwards on top of me if I hadn't prevented him by putting the old gypsy water trick into play. I'd learned about this trick from a horse trainer back in the East but this was the first chance I'd ever had of trying it out.

Tent lines, Green Point Camp, South Africa, May 1900. Trooper McElroy stands fourth from left.

Just as Tom reached the zenith of his rearing, I swung the ginger ale bottle with all my might and brought it crashing down on the little knob just back of his ears. The bottle shattered, showering him with hot water. His front legs did the splits and his nose hit the dirt.

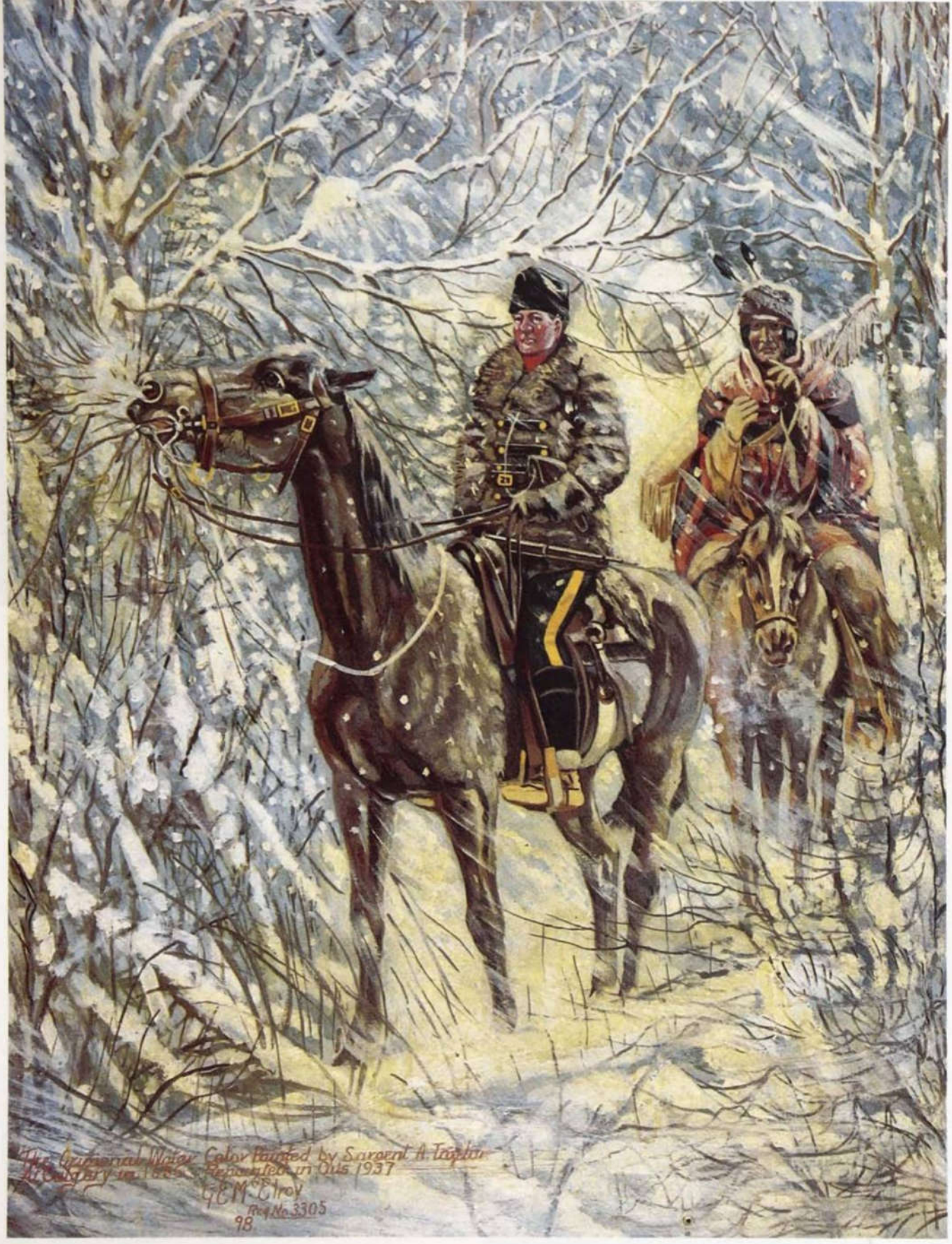
Poor old Tom could not figure out just what had happened, but whatever it was, he was in no hurry for seconds. After he'd recovered somewhat, I got him up on his feet and urged him to move forward once more. This time, still dazed and bewildered, he obeyed and, afterwards, never needed another gypsy water treatment. During the rest of my stay at Estevan, we had many fine rides together whenever it could be safely done without Old Stripes finding out. Tom was an example of a wonderful horse that had been spoiled by some inexperienced rider who had perhaps pulled him over backwards in a clumsy attempt to hold on. The horse, being the intelligent creature that he was, soon caught on to the idea that falling over backwards was an excellent way to get rid of unwanted riders.

An attack of pneumonia, which nearly landed me in the Clay Bank cemetery on the Souris River, brought my happy days at Estevan to an end. After a period of convalescence at the Depot, I was posted to Calgary because of its higher altitude. Calgary was a crack post with a lot of fine men and it was a good place to serve. Superintendent Saunders, secretly known as Siclox, was the Officer Commanding. Inspectors Wilson and Williams were known as Pie-Face Jimmy and Boomderay while Sorrel Top and Paper Collar Johnny were the nicknames of others.

The first duty to which I was assigned was to assist Provost Sergeant Mickey Cochrane. Cochrane had once been a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Although not a big man, he was a very powerful one and would demonstrate his strength at every opportunity. One of his tricks was to grab the lobe of your ear and squeeze it until it was black and blue.

Sergeant Cochrane was a strange man. He could put a rope around a condemned man's neck and apologize to him if it happened to scratch a little — and

NWMP constable and scout on winter patrol. The watercolour that served as a basis for McElroy's oil painting was by Sergeant A. Taylor of Calgary. (RCMP Museum, Regina).


Original Water Color Painted by Sargent A. Tapton
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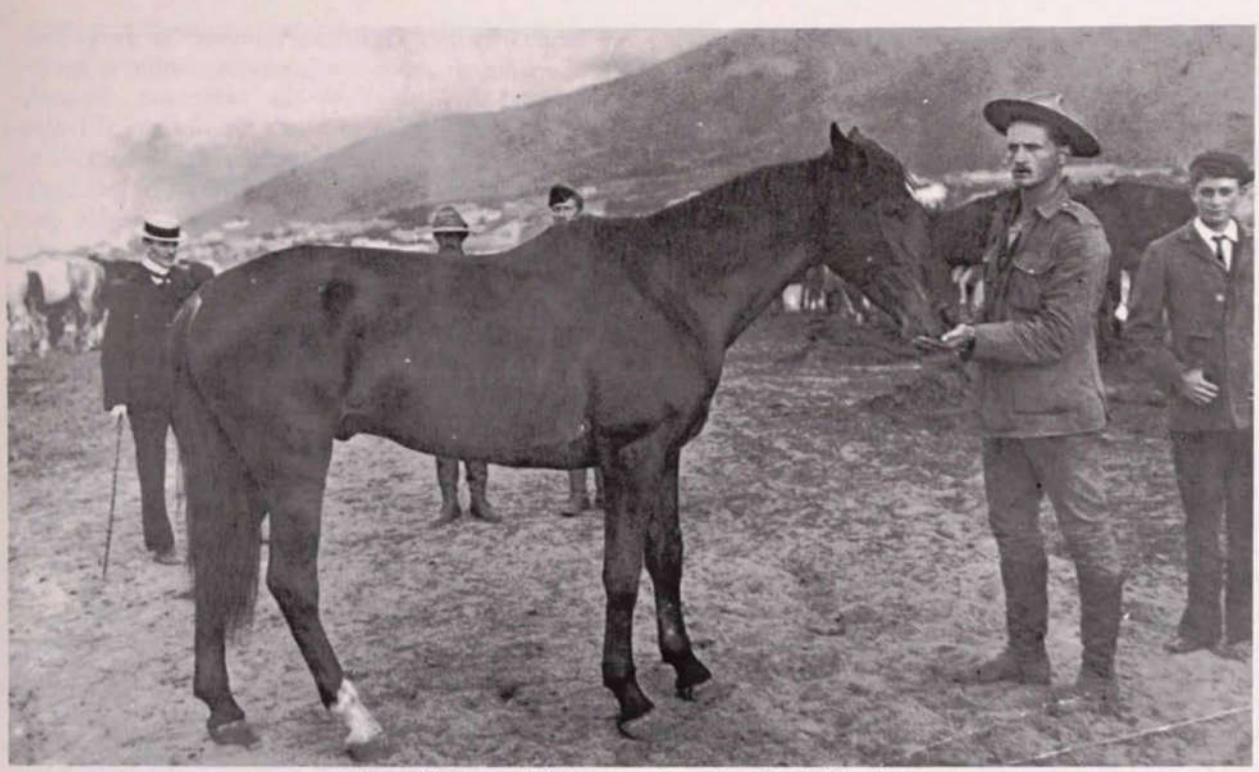
Above: McElroy's painting of the NWMP crossing the dirt hills of Saskatchewan in 1874 is based on a drawing by Henri Julien, who accompanied the 1874 expedition. Below: NWMP winter dress in the 1880s. (RCMP Museum, Regina).

the next moment yank the lever that would drop him to Perdition through the trap door in the deck of the scaffold. It was all in the day's work to Sergeant Mickey Cochrane.

From the gaol, I graduated to landscape gardening and whitewashing the stones that trimmed the drives and pathways. Then one morning at stables Riding Instructor Sergeant Hilliam said to me, "You're a pretty old recruit around here. Its about time you took on some of these young horses." Sergeant Hilliam made no secret of the fact that he considered me to be far too cocky for a recruit. He was an old time cavalryman who had once served with the famed 17th Lancers — the Death or Glory Boys. In this case, it was going to be death for me and glory for Hilliam and the cayuses.

The first horse of this rough string I was given to teach good manners was a big, brown brute named Max. He had a ewe neck, an ugly hammer-head, a barrel shaped like a blimp and, all told, was just about as homely as it is possible for a horse to be. Our first encounter took place on a morning exercise ride where the troop had been ordered to carry carbines. Under Sergeant Hilliam's supervision, we led our horses from the stables to the field behind the sheds down by the river and the hay corral. There, we were ordered to mount, then walk march and, finally, to trot. With Sergeant Hilliam, you walked a little, you trotted most



Trooper McElroy with his horse near Cape Town, South Africa 1900.

of the time and you were hardly ever permitted to canter. Posting was strictly forbidden.

My seat bounced in the saddle about half a dozen times when Max suddenly bent double and shot up like a rocket. I grabbed with both hands to keep from falling and the carbine went clattering to the ground. I also lost both stirrups and was, by now, kneeling on the saddle while Max bucked and crow-hopped all over the lot. Somehow I managed to stay on his back even though I did pull out a lot of his mane by the roots. Then, suddenly, above all the horse squeals, pounding hooves and other sounds of battle, I could hear Sergeant Hilliam's shrill voice shouting, "Get off him! Get off him!"

I obeyed by jumping clear on the off side but still kept my grip on the reins. Max continued his struggle to break away.

"You don't have to ride him unless you like!" shouted Sergeant Hilliam. He was duty bound to say this. It was much the same as the official warning given when arresting suspected criminals.

It was a tempting offer but I knew that if I quit now, I might as well pack my gear and apply for my discharge from the Force. Max, meanwhile, was quick to take advantage of the diversion. He reared up and when he came down both front feet landed on my shoulders. Then, as I picked myself up, spitting out a mouthful of mud and manure, I heard Sergeant Hilliam's shrill British accent shouting once again, "You don't have to ride him unless you like!"

"Sergeant," I said, "I'll ride that (unprintable expletive) if it's the last thing I do on this earth! That is, I will if you will permit me to shorten my stirrups two holes."

At that time, we rode a very long stirrup with almost a straight leg. This was fine for most work, but didn't give enough leverage for rough riding. Sergeant Hilliam gave me permission to shorten the stirrups and I set out to re-capture Max, who was standing on a nearby dung heap with his head hanging down and looking half asleep. He made no move to get away as I approached and remained quiet and docile even when I was adjusting the stirrups. He just stood with one ear down, no doubt planning his next moves.

Once I was mounted, he exploded into action again but this time I was ready for him and wasn't hampered with a carbine. I managed to stay put while Max demonstrated his full repertoire of tricks and did his damndest to buck me off. There was no more school that morning. Max and I were the whole show, and, if he enjoyed it as much as I did, we both had good reason to be satisfied. But, even though I rode him to a standstill, Max managed to have the last word. At noon stables, just after I had filled his feed box with oats, he managed to cow-kick me in the belly.

But from then on, I had no other duties except to ride and train eight young cayuses and that was one of the best jobs I had during my short time at Calgary.

Sergeant Major Dunning's horse was named Noodles. This horse was quite famous because his picture had been published in a history book and printed on post cards. Many a buck sought permission to saddle Noodles and have his picture taken while on his back to send to his girl or the folks back home. Noodles was not a bad looker and he had lots of style, but it was a style I, personally, have no use for. He was a dancer. I swear he could travel all day in a bushel basket.

One night a man named Ledley was stricken with some kind of seizure in the canteen and I was sent to fetch a doctor from town. I ran to the stables for a horse and noticed Noodles in the first stall to the left. He was supposed to be fast so I jumped on to his back without bothering to put a saddle or even a bit on him. We lit out for town and raced hell-for-leather down the main street to Doctor Lafferty's office. I informed the doctor that we had a very sick man out at the Post and suggested that he borrow Noodles. He agreed and sent me to the drugstore for brandy and some other things he needed.

But when I got back about fifteen or twenty minutes later, the doctor and Noodles were still there. Noodles wouldn't let the doctor get up on his back. It might have been all right if the doctor had been wearing a uniform, but Noodles was a police horse and he refused to play gee-gee with some strange civilian. As things turned out, the delay didn't really make much difference to poor Ledley. He had suffered a heart attack and was probably dead soon after hitting the canteen floor.

While I was still at Calgary, it was announced that Canadians would soon be sent to South Africa and recruiting began for the first battalion of Canadian Mounted Rifles. Members of the NWMP were offered leave of absence without pay if they volunteered and there was an immediate rush of applicants. I volunteered along with all the others, but was turned down flat. Later, when Lord Strathcona's Horse was being recruited, I tried again. This time, I got as far as the doctor.

Doctor Rouleau was a civilian working for the Police. He had serious doubts about me because of my bout with pneumonia the previous year. "What? You want to go?" he exclaimed. "I can't let you go!" But after listening to my breathing with his stethoscope, he commented, "Not too bad. If your heart is okay, I will let you go."

My heart was okay and so I got into the Strathcona Horse by the skin of my teeth. The total strength of the regiment was 500. My regimental number was 493.

The officers, NCOs, men and horses who went to South Africa were the last of the old-time North West Mounted Police. When they returned the Force had a new Commissioner, new uniforms, saddlery, equipment and methods. Even the name was changed, becoming first the Royal North West Mounted Police and, finally, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. When I got back to Canada, I was found to be medically unfit for service and I received an honourable discharge. I now began to pursue my ambition to become an artist. There hadn't been much opportunity for art in the Police or in South Africa. After working on a variety of jobs including railway construction, land surveys and a stint as Chief of Police of Michipicoten Harbour, I drifted down into the United States. There I took art lessons and, eventually, landed a job as a newspaper sketch artist and cartoonist. After several years of this, I became a full-fledged commercial artist and magazine illustrator. I made a good living at this right up until the Depression but I was never able to achieve my ambition to produce paintings of the NWMP and the Canadian West in the way that Charles Russell and Fred Remington had portrayed American frontier life.

During the 1930s, the late RCMP Commissioner, Sir James MacBrien, commissioned me to paint a series of pictures about the Force and I was taken back on strength as a Special Constable. This opportunity was more than welcome, even though I was considerably restricted as to subject matter and how the pictures were to be painted. Most of them were to be based on old photographs, drawings and other historical material. Still, it was at least a start and I did my best with what I was given to work with. The paintings are now at the RCMP Museum at Regina.

It was a unique and wonderful experience to come back into the Force as a Special Constable after an absence of nearly forty years. There were no familiar faces and scarcely any horses but the same *esprit-de-corps* and high sense of duty was still much in evidence. And, as far as I could see, the officers and men were still of the same superior breed as those who'd worn pillbox caps and rode living, breathing horses instead of patrol cars, speed boats and aeroplanes. It was like coming home again after a long journey. ♦

"You have to love one man an awful lot to be able to live this life . . ."

Northern Bride, 1947

BY JOYCE THIERRY

Women have played an important, but often unacknowledged role in the development of Canada's wilderness. In the early days of the Hudson's Bay Company it was common for a trader to take an Indian wife, not only because it would make his domestic life easier, but also for companionship and to make family ties with the Indians who traded with the Company. In the 1830s white women began to make the trek into the isolated posts with their husbands. One of the first was Frances Simpson, the young bride of the Governor of Rupert's Land, George Simpson.

If we take a 100-year leap into the future we will see that there are many similarities in the experiences of the wives of Hudson's Bay Company men, whether they lived in the 1830s or 1940s. By the 1940s, the wife of an HBC post manager was able to take a more active role in her husband's world by helping with the account books, the radio and by providing basic medical aid. There was also the endless task of feeding all the pilots, prospectors and other summer visitors who came through the post. But the isolation and the long, lonely winters were much the same as those experienced in the 1800s.

Effie Thierry (nee Leslie) lived at Woswonaby [also known as Waswanipi] HBC Post from 1947 to 1951. This is the story of her experiences during the first year, using her journal and private correspondence as references. What emerges is a picture of a woman fascinated by what she saw, a woman who felt the beauty of the bush landscape and the warmth of the native people.

But her journal also makes reference to the loneliness she felt in the long winter months, uninterrupted by visitors except the monthly airplane that brought food and mail. Effie Thierry's story is just one example of the women in this country who have followed their husbands and made a home in the wilderness. They are more than just "the boss's wife". They are the invisible ones, respected in their particular world, but otherwise unknown.

Effie Leslie met Ron Thierry in Ottawa in 1941, where they both won Dominion Honours representing Manitoba in 4-H judging competitions. Years later she wrote, "This trip to Ottawa gave me my first taste of life away from a small prairie town and I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. This was a turning point in my life and helped me get away from home and make a life of my own." She left Holland, Manitoba, took a commercial course in Winnipeg and became a secretary with the Manitoba Department of Agriculture. At the same time, Ron Thierry joined the Hudson's Bay Company and left for the Eastern Arctic. They continued to correspond during Ron's four years on Baffin Island. When he returned to Manitoba in 1946, they became engaged and were married on 7 June 1947. Effie began keeping a journal at this time and for the next four years wrote in it her impressions of places and people, keeping an accurate and intriguing account of her life in the bush.

After a short honeymoon spent visiting family and friends, they travelled east by bus and train to Winnipeg, North Bay, Noranda and arrived at Senneterre, Quebec. On 19 June, they boarded a bush plane and flew to the Hudson's Bay Company post at Woswonaby, Quebec.

This was Effie's first plane ride and she laughs when she thinks of all the time she has spent flying since then: "I've now had so many flights in Cessna, Beaver, Otter, Norseman, even the old Junker bush flying craft,

Ron and Effie Thierry. "I've now had so many flights in Cessna, Beaver, Otter, Norseman, even the old Junker bush flying craft, both on floats and skis, that I've lost count long ago".

both on floats and skis, that I've lost count long ago." The post was 96 air miles and 300 canoe miles from Senneterre. But there was more than just the excitement of her first plane ride. As she looked about her at what was to be her home for the next few years, she took in the Waswanipi Band Cree Indians giving them a royal welcome, the skinny mongrel dogs moving about on the shoreline, and directly in front of her, the Hudson's Bay store and house. The post consisted of several old frame buildings situated at the bottom of a hill on the point of a two-by-three-mile island located in the Waswanipi River.

> **Undated, 1947:** In the warm months of summer the Indians move into the cleared area near the post. They usually arrive about the last week in June and do not leave until September 5th. In September the entire village is a hive of activity for about three days. The store is filled with Indians obtaining food and clothing, guns, shells, and new canoe and tent canvas. Some of this is obtained on Indian Department rations issued by the Indian Agent, the remainder on HBC debt. They obtain this debt each fall and pay it as they bring in their furs during the winter and spring months.

Effie's first impressions of the Hudson's Bay store and house were favourable. After giving the main floor of the two-bedroom house a quick look, she and Ron went to the store and checked out the variety of goods on the shelves, from food, clothing, needles, combs, radios, hunting and trapping supplies, to prints and flannelette sold by the yard.

> **June 19, 1947:** House is right near the store. Both buildings have white walls and red roof. Two warehouses owned by the HBC come next in line, then the Anglican Mission and the Missionary's house, then the Indian cemetery. The next building is, or I should say was, the Roman Catholic Mission at one time. About one-half of the settlement were R.C. One night a big wind came up and blew the roof off the R.C. Mission. The Indians decided it was the devil and was definitely a bad omen and moved in a body to the Anglican Mission. (The Anglicans have been pounding nails in the roof of their Mission ever since.)
>
> I came back to the house and took a look upstairs. It's not too bad. The ceilings are low and there are leaky stovepipes in both bedrooms. No curtains or blinds on the windows, or covers on the bureaus. I guess bachelors did not think such things necessary.

The Cree Indians lived on the island from June to August and spent the winter months out on the land trapping and hunting. They only came into the store

at Woswonaby every two to three months to obtain more food, sell furs or because of illness. A teacher and a missionary lived on the island during June, July and August. The remainder of the year, the post manager, his wife and clerk carried on by themselves.

Effie's love for the native people of the post is still with her today. Although she did not speak any Cree when she arrived in 1947, and many of the Indians did not speak English, they used sign language and with lots of laughter the message always got across. Her journal is filled with references to their easy laughter and beauty and illnesses.

Woswonaby Post was the reserve home of 350 Cree Indians. The only contact at that time with the "outside" world was via the radio and the bush planes that came in with supplies and food: one plane each week during the summer months and one plane per month in December, January, February and March. In July, the coming winter and spring supplies were flown in on the HBC Canso freight plane. It usually took six loads to bring in all the freight of food, medical and store supplies. During break-up and freeze-up of the Waswanipi River, the planes could not land and the radio was the only contact.

For nine months of the year, the Waswanipi Indians went off to their separate hunting and trapping grounds. During the winter months, the women and children rarely came in to the post. The men would come with the dog-teams bringing their furs and taking home supplies of food and medicine. They always stopped at Ron and Effie's house to tell them the latest news — the birth of a baby or who had been sick.

Effie had only been at the post for three weeks when she tallied up the number of planes that had landed and the meals she had served: "There have been 23 planes, including planes from Senneterre, the HBC, Indian Department, mining companies, as well as the bishop's chartered plane. There have been 19 prospectors on the island since our arrival". Everyone who stopped by expected to stay for tea, dinner or overnight and Effie spent much of her time cooking for prospectors, surveyors, pilots, missionaries or fur traders. Her 15 July 1947 journal entry reads: "We had nine for lunch. Quite a variety of professions too: a surveyor, an engineer, a doctor, dentist, nurse, missionary, two fur traders and a stenographer/nurse (darned if I was going to be classed as a housewife)."

The first year Effie was at the post, there was no nurse, so, once the Indians found out she could help them, she was kept busy trying to heal running tubercular sores, lung conditions and bad cuts from axes and saws and taking part in childbirths and deaths. Effie wrote years later: "I never made a good nurse. I got too involved in the personal lives of my friends at Woswonaby. I had taken a nine-month Practical Nursing course at St. Joseph's Hospital in Winnipeg just before we were married and I never regretted

Hudson's Bay Company post at Woswonaby, 1947.

WOSWONABY 1947

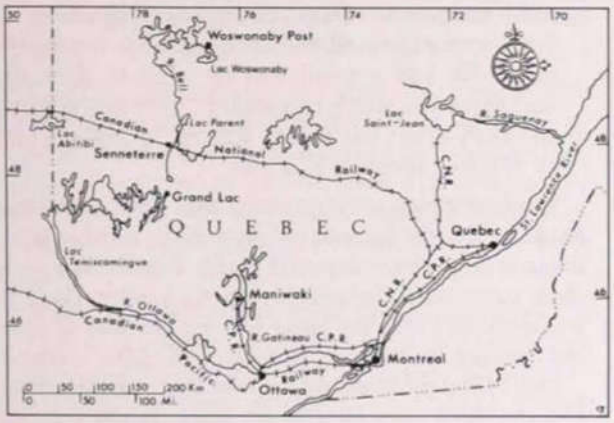
Children at Woswonaby, 1947. Left to right: Jacob and Peter Gull, Janie Blacksmith, Eva Gull and Winnie Gull.

The Gull clan leaves for winter camp, 1947.

Effie and Ron Thierry.

Woswonaby, Christmas 1947.

"It was a wonderful experience. I learned a lot about the Indians and it affected the rest of my life".



having this." She was called upon to use her nursing skills daily.

July 18, 1947: Just as I commenced work on some pie crusts this a.m., Ronald called me to come and dress a burnt hand for Willie Kitchen. Agness Neeposh scalded her leg on Sunday and has been coming in daily to have it dressed. Edward Eagle's wife, Annie, cut her hand with the axe yesterday. I put iodine on it and then Sulphathiazole. It healed too quickly so have had her here three times today, soaking the hand for one-half hour periods in salt and hot water. Edward's little girl, Sophie, has a deep sore at the base of her neck. They brought her to me for the first time today.

In the Autumn 1974 issue of the Anglican magazine *The Northland*, Reverend E.C. Grey wrote of his stay at Waswanipi Post in the summer of 1946. He mentioned a nurse who had been sent into the post to help with a measles epidemic. "They accepted her treatment of measles — but would have no part of her for childbirth. Very firmly hustled her out of the tent." Effie's experience was very different. Childbirth was a continual event in the summer months at the post.

July 22, 1947: I spent Friday night with Frances Ottereyes, Wally's wife, who was expecting her sixth baby. I took some absorbent, gauze, an old sheet, tissue and artery forceps. Janie went with me so I let her go ahead and get things ready, not knowing just what they were accustomed to using. She spread an old rabbit blanket then an old gray blanket on the floor, put a pillow at the head and presto, there was Frances' bed for the delivery. Next came a wash basin and a pair of small nail scissors, the only pair on hand. The baby's clothes were taken out of a box and hung over the centre pole of the tent so they could get warm. The children were sent off to someone else's tent for the night with the exception of the little girl who is about two years old. Frances was sitting and walking and pains were very irregular so I came home at 10:00 p.m. They called me at 1:30 a.m. and when I got there I found the tent very cold and drafty. It was rainy and windy outside. Frances was still walking about, pains were every 15-20 minutes. Wally and the little girl were curled up in the corner and I sat on top of a small wooden chest, and shivered. By 5 a.m. I was nearly frozen. Then Annie Eagle, midwife among the Indians, came to ask for gauze, absorbent and "me" so away we went to see how Mary Blacksmith was. Mary was having five minute pains and being her first baby I expected it would be quite a while so came home to bed.

Saturday night was about the same thing over again, though I put on more warm clothing and we kept a fire going strong in the wee stove inside the tent.

Goodbye to Woswonaby

When I arrived at 1:30 a.m., Frances' pains were about ten minutes apart. I came home at 4 a.m. Went back about 12 midnight Sunday. Frances stated she had pains about every hour, her left side and back were sore and she was a very tired looking woman. The tent was cold, no fire on and the three children and Wally were sleeping quite contentedly. I roused Wally and told him to get a fire going and to keep it going then Ron and I came home to bed. We heard a bang on the door at 12:45 so up I got and hopped into my slacks and sweater. It is really quite a sensation walking up through the camping grounds, pitch black, just your flashlight guiding you along a narrow path, dogs howling on all sides, some tied to stakes and some not.

When we reached Wally's tent we found Mrs. Trapper and Janie already there and Frances in great pain. At 2:10 the baby's head appeared and Janie took over while I cut the cord and clamped forceps etc. Only during the last five minutes did Frances cry out with the pain. We had to waken Wally to tell him the baby had arrived. He is deaf as a post and was sleeping peacefully through it all. However, he woke up and put his arms around Frances to comfort her when it was all over. Then and only then, did she cry. The three kiddies had slept through it all. (Frances' other two babies had died.) Stewart slept in one corner, Mary in the other corner opposite, wee Louise beside her, then Wally, then Frances having her baby. The water pail, stove, chest, table and a box took up the remaining excess space. Janie and I walked around and over everyone and everything. We had a small coal oil lamp to work by. Technique and sterile equipment I have heard about and read about but meant nothing to Janie or me on Monday morning at 2 a.m.

It was the long winter months that Effie found the hardest. "I never learned to live with the terrible loneliness of long winter days and nights. I could cope with them until about February, then to April or May it was difficult to fill the many hours. One tired of sewing, reading, and always talking of the same topics."

One of the problems was the lack of company. Ron and the clerk were busy at the store during the day and Effie had to fill her hours up with cooking, cleaning, sewing, knitting, reading and snowshoe walks.

October 19, 1947: Sometimes I'd give an awful lot to have one other girl to walk and talk with but I guess I'd better reconcile myself to living in a man's world. You have to love one man an awful lot to be able to live this life though and it seems that Sunday is the worst day of all. You somehow expect to do things together but it never works out that way. Such is the life of a Hudson's Bay Post Manager's wife.

The radio played a very important role in bush lives. The transmitting radio set provided them with a link with the outside world, allowing them to radio for supplies, airplanes or emergency needs. One of the first things Effie did was learn Morse Code to enable her to send and receive messages. The other radio provided them with their entertainment: they listened to hockey games, to the marriage of Princess Elizabeth and Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten (20 November 1947) and every Saturday night received messages from family and friends via the CBC program "The Northern Messenger".

Just as Effie and Ron celebrated in the new life that arrived to the families in the summer time, they also shared in the sorrows. The duties of the HBC personnel included acting as messengers with news from the outside world.

February 28, 1948: Mr. Lariviere [Indian Agent] wired today to say Edward Eagle had died in Quebec City Hospital yesterday morning and was being buried in Anglican Cemetery at Quebec City. Ronald and I went up to Sam [Gull, the interpreter] to tell

him, a duty we did not appreciate as Edward was a close friend of Sam's. We feel so sorry for Annie and wee Sophie.

Later Mrs. Cappassists and her son, Harry, arrived at the Post, bringing news that their daughter and sister Annie was very ill with T.B. so Ronald is making arrangements for her to go out to the Sanatorium. This is one of the many families who have suffered much from this dread disease. The father and other son died in recent years. You feel so helpless knowing there is nothing you can do to help them.

By March, spring fever was affecting everyone. The long winter was almost over and the spring arrival of the Indians was only three months away. Any activity that helped to break the boredom and routine was welcomed. The outside world was eagerly listened to on the radio and world events touched even the bush posts.

March 1, 1948: It was 40 below zero this a.m. but calm and bright. Communists have now taken over Rumania, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Great consternation in Great Britain, USA, Canada, France and other allied countries.

March 26, 1948: I spent most of four days in the office typing Indian Affairs Branch Accounts for Ronald last week. Hated to return to routine household tasks again. At least there is a bit of activity and something different going on at the store. Life gets a bit boring at this time of year.

June 9, 1948: Eva and Joe Ottereyes' wee baby died today. The nurse thinks the baby had Spinal Meningitis. She gave it penicillin injections and the old Indian women claimed she killed it with the needle. Dick [Stephenson, theology student from Trinity College, Toronto] had some trouble trying to assist her in clearing up the rumors. This is Dick's first funeral so he is a bit upset and worried too.

This was the one-year anniversary of Ron and Effie's arrival at the post. She had put behind her prairie roots and learned to live in the Quebec bush. She had helped with births and illnesses, learned to send radio messages in Morse Code, shoot a .22 rifle, paddle a canoe, showshoe and make a grocery list that would bring in enough food on the annual supply flight to last them one year.

Ron and Effie stayed at Woswonaby Post until February 1951. In the last entry in her journal, Effie wrote: "Ron handed in his resignation because the Hudson's Bay Company would not transfer him to a post on a railway line. We wanted to have a family so Ron decided to go to Val d'Or, Quebec and spend time looking for a job. We said goodbye to all our Woswonaby friends and headed for Val d'Or." Further adventures in their lives included Effie and Ron going even further into bush country where they operated fishing and hunting

Effie at Harry Otter's birthday.

camps on the Kaniapiskau River, 1,000 miles north of Montreal. By this time, they had two children to take with them.

Effie and Ron are now retired and living on Vancouver Island. "Much better weather than in the North," Effie says. "I think living in the North does something for you that nothing else can do. You're dealing with weather, food, shelter. Life gets so simplified. But looking back on those days, I would have to say I don't think I handled the loneliness well. I need people and the winters were so very long. And I think a good percentage of women have to cope with [loneliness], more than men. It was a wonderful experience. I learned a lot about the Indians and it affected the rest of my life". ♦

Joyce Thierry is the daughter of Effie and Ron Thierry. She is a poet, writer and editor and lives on Gabriola Island in British Columbia.

The Skeena War

No shots were fired, but it was a grand outing for Victoria's soldiers — until it started to rain

BY KEN CAMPBELL

From the days of the Hudson's Bay Company, through the gold rushes and into Confederation, the Royal Navy protected British Columbia's coastline. The men-of-war represented the British Empire in that distant colony, and kept the coast under the Union Jack through international conflicts with the United States and Russia. As well, the Royal Navy enforced civil obedience. Wherever outbreaks of trouble between whites and natives occurred, the remedy was swift and simple: Send in the gunboats. Usually the mere presence of the impressive naval ships was enough to have "a salutary effect", a phrase used time and again to describe the results of a gunboat visitation on a coastal native village.

By the late 1880s the Tsimshian tribes who lived along the Skeena River and adjacent coast had been visited by Royal Naval vessels on five occasions. The natives had lived for over forty years in relative peace beside the local Europeans, the men of the Hudson's Bay Company.

After B.C.'s union with Canada in 1871, however, new settlers arrived on the Skeena, attracted by the lucrative salmon runs of the river and gold of the mountains. By 1888 five canneries were operating on the Skeena, while the trails of the prospectors had opened B.C.'s northern interior, developing the Skeena into a viable transportation route. In 1880 the Hudson's Bay Company erected a post at Hazelton near where the Skeena and Bulkley rivers meet, to service its established forts in the interior over the new route. With more settlers encroaching on their land and various government agencies interfering with their life style, setting out reserves and administering European laws, the Tsimshian found themselves more and more in conflict with the newcomers.

For a time the Royal Engineers had offered land-based protection for the colony, but British Columbia had no such force from the Engineers' departure in 1863 until the establishment of "C" Battery, Royal Canadian Army, in 1887. In October of that year, fifty men from "A" Battery in Kingston and fifty from "B" Battery in Quebec were drafted to the new force. With their wives, children and pets, they gathered at Carleton Place on the mainline of the new Canadian Pacific Railway bound for the West Coast. This was the first Canadian transcontinental troop train. In Victoria the new battery was housed in the old Agricultural Hall at Beacon Hill Park until barracks were completed at Work Point, near the entrance to Victoria harbour.

Victorians were pleased to have their own army detachment, but many were disappointed that the unit was Canadian rather than British. To many oldtimers and society people, Victoria was still a colony, and they resented the intrusion of the Easterners. Lieutenant G. H. Ogilvie, one of the officers transferred from Kingston, described the colonial atmosphere in his memoirs: "The people of British Columbia, the old timers that is, did not have much 'truck' with Eastern Canadians at that period and were really more English than the old country people themselves. They would not think of doing business with Eastern Canada and always passed through the United States via New York when travelling to and from England."

The soldiers' barrack duties, drill and other tasks were not onerous. The armaments at Work Point were so antiquated that the main benefit derived from artillery drill, according to Ogilvie, was the exercise. Commanding headquarters were in Ottawa, a week's train journey away, so there was ample warning of an impending inspection.

"C" Battery enjoys the mild weather during its first Christmas in Victoria. The picture carried greetings to brothers-in-arms in "A" and "B" Batteries back East.

But this relaxed style of life came to an abrupt halt in the summer of 1888. On 27 June the white residents of Hazelton sent a messenger to Victoria carrying the news that their lives and property were in immediate peril. On 19 June, the letters carried by the messenger advised, Constable Green of Hazelton had gone to a neighbouring village, Kitwanga, to arrest a chief known as Kitwancool Jim for murder. While trying to make the arrest, Green shot and killed the chief. The Gitksan (People of the Skeena) were said by Constable B. W. Washburn, officer in charge at Hazelton, to be bent on retribution, demanding $1,000 and a man's life in place of that of the murdered chief. "Am fortifying the Hudson's Bay Co.'s building", the Hazelton constable wrote. "Adopted it as our barracks. After three days hard work, moving in rain, have made ourselves secure". He requested that the provincial government send fifteen or twenty men to bring about order. "It would nip the affair in the bud, and secure peace and law for the future".

The messenger finally reached Victoria with the news on 11 July. Soon everyone in the capital city was talking about the apparent uprising. Rumours of inter-tribal warfare spread, tales were told of threats to the lives of the white people in Hazelton, even the death of Mr. Clifford, the Hudson's Bay Company agent there. There were fears that the incident would have repercussions on the lower Skeena, interfering with the business of the salmon canneries which were manned largely by native workers.

British Columbia's Premier and Attorney-General, Alex Davie, had known about the murder case for months, working with Superintendent Roycroft of the B.C. Police to track down Kitwancool Jim, who had gone into hiding after being accused of murder. Now he called in Roycroft and twelve special constables to lead an expedition to Hazelton to "establish order in that hitherto turbulent and disaffected locality". Falling back on the precedent of a show of strength, and perhaps sensing a potential repeat of the North-West Rebellion, he also called out eighty members of "C" Battery to support Roycroft. Thus he was dispatching nearly one hundred men, though Constable Washburn had requested fifteen to twenty, a number large enough in his estimation to "nip the affair in the bud".

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"C" Battery assembles in front of its barracks, the Agricultural Hall in Beacon Hill Park, Victoria, before the departure to the Skeena, 16 July 1888.

Davie's orders to Roycroft were specific. He was to call on "C" Battery only if his progress to Hazelton was obstructed. "The Executive desire to express to you most strongly the opinion that the Militia should not be called upon to fire, except in the case of last resort". In a later communication he emphasized that the Militia was not to go up the Skeena if matters were settled, and if the senior officer insisted on proceeding further it would be at his own risk and responsibility. While Davie told Roycroft, "Do not consider your discretion in any way fettered", he seems to have put rigid restraints on Lt. Col. J. G. Holmes, Commander of "C" Battery, throughout the campaign.

Within four days the plans for the expedition were decided upon and arrangements made. The special constables were to travel up the coast aboard the Royal Navy ship HMS *Caroline*, accompanied by "C" Battery. Roycroft would leave on an earlier ship, the *Boscowitz*, as would the bulk of the battery's stores. Colonel Holmes chose special equipment for the campaign. Brown canvas clothing had to be specially made, and was finished just hours before departure. Each man was to carry a pack that was light and easily removed. Holmes had used a similar pack on an elk-hunting trip, he told his superiors in Ottawa, and found it quite suitable for rough country.

The colonel requested that the *Caroline* move to Victoria harbour, closer to the barracks; when this could not be arranged, he asked that transportation to Esquimalt be provided for his eighty men. The Premier replied drily, "The Government having caused enquiries to be made find that they are unable to provide carriage for your men to Esquimalt."

So it was that at 11:00 Monday morning, 16 July, "C" Battery's parade was inspected by Lieutenant-Governor Nelson, who complimented the troops on their fine appearance and expressed the hope that they would return home safely, successful, but "not compelled to fire a shot". The men embarked on the journey with mixed feelings of bravado and fear. One soldier proclaimed that he had fought Apaches and he had always found that "a brave has no use for, and will never shoot a white man whose hair was cut short." His hair had been closely cropped the previous night. The tailor of the battery, unsure of his fate, made a verbal will. To the bandmaster, who would return from the North immediately, the tailor willed his shears and his goose.

Here were a group of Easterners less than a year in Victoria, bound for a mountainous northern land, densely covered with an evergreen rainforest; but if they were Easterners, they were also Victoria's army, venturing forth to bring peace to the western reaches

of the Empire. Residents filled the streets to watch the troops march from Beacon Hill to Esquimalt. They paraded through town, along Humboldt Street, Government and Johnson Streets, and over the railway bridge. Even this portal was crossed with ceremony, as the Hon. Robert Dunsmuir, President of the Council, opened the gate for them to pass. So they marched on to Esquimalt, a distance of four miles, through the July heat and dust, with the band in the lead playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me". By the time they reached Foster's wharf their bright new uniforms were tarnished with the dust. There they joined with the special constables who had arrived on a "bus", armed with rifle, revolver and dirk, dressed in distinguished and clean uniforms.

Soon, both parties were aboard the *Caroline*, accompanied by Hon. J. H. Turner, Minister of Finance, who owned a cannery on the Skeena River. Then, amidst tears and cheers, the *Caroline* weighed anchor and sailed off to confront the natives, with the ship's siren shrieking, her pennants flying bravely, and the band playing proudly.

The three-day journey took the troops through the splendour of the Inside Passage, that protected chain of sounds and channels that extends from Vancouver Island to Alaska. The soldiers seem to have enjoyed their tour immensely, despite having to adapt to the seaman's life. The *Colonist*'s "war correspondent", Dr. Chalmers (also one of the special constables), wrote in his report of the excursion, "it will be a very long time before we forget the good time we had on board the H.M.S. *Caroline* and the generous treatment accorded us by all on board, not to speak of the fun we had with Jubilee, Ginger, and Vandalia." He provided no further detail on the last three mentioned.

The soldiers and special constables had to bunk on deck. While they were searching in vain for soft planks the British "bluejackets" came to their rescue, offering the use of their hammocks. When the soldiers endeavoured unsuccessfully to climb into the hammocks without falling out, "the jack-tars came to our relief and soon we were as snug as we could well wish to be".

The next morning at breakfast the men were greeted with a large tin of greasy cocoa. If anyone tasted the beverage that first morning, none were so brave the next, for the *Caroline* was passing through Queen Charlotte Sound, which is open to the Pacific Ocean. The hammocks swung in time to the pitching and tossing of the ocean swells. To make matters worse, sea spray drenched them. Chalmers described their plight: "Wet, hungry, sick and thirsty, we wended our way on to the top-gallant forecastle to pass a few minutes in admiring the wonders of the deep." By lunch the sound had been crossed and the seasick landlubbers were in a better mood for eating.

Officers pose in front of their mess at the camp on the Ecstall River, their home for a month.

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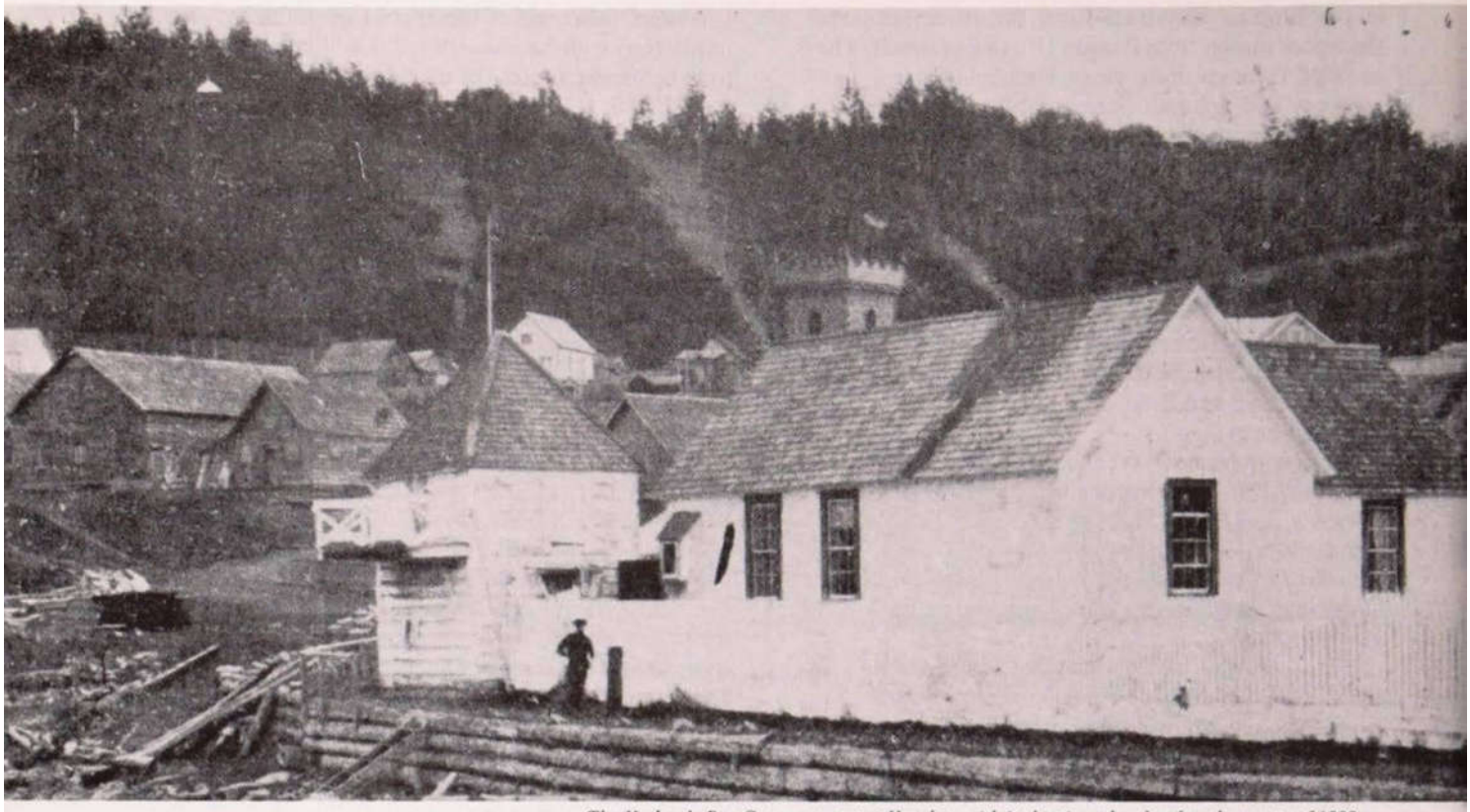

The Hudson's Bay Company post at Hazelton with its bastion, shortly after the events of 1888.

The highlight of the voyage was the concert given on the last evening at sea. The *Colonist* printed the programme before departure, a curious detail given the shortage of time available for the journey's preparations. Sir William Wiseman, captain of the *Caroline*, gave two comic recitations "in his inimitable style" while the "gallant Colonel sang 'The Midshipmite' in his usual manly style."

On Friday 20 July the *Caroline* anchored off Port Essington, near the mouth of the Skeena River. Essington was the hub of the north coast during the summer. A conglomeration of many races gathered there to fish for and work in the salmon canneries. Its stores, hotels and bars provided a welcome release for the fishermen. Port Essington was a one-man town, begun in 1871 by Robert Cunningham. This fiery Irishman had worked for the Hudson's Bay Company at nearby Fort Simpson (today's Port Simpson) until he decided to enter into his own trading business closer to the Skeena River.

The *Caroline* reached Port Essington before the *Boscowitz*, so Holmes, Wiseman and Turner went ashore to assess the situation while they waited for Roycroft. There they learned that the rumours heard in Victoria were false; Mr. Clifford was quite healthy and no further conflicts had occurred between natives and whites. However, all residents except a missionary had taken protection behind Hazelton's strongly barricaded Hudson's Bay Company post.

Roycroft arrived the next day, and the officials decided that the constables would leave for Hazelton as soon as canoes and crew could be found to transport them, while "C" Battery would camp at the river mouth awaiting word from Roycroft, and return to Victoria at the earliest possibility.

According to Turner, as he visited on the Skeena, "There was a general expression of opinion that the expedition would have a very salutary effect upon the Indian Mind."

Holmes searched for a suitable camping spot and found a rocky, densely wooded point a mile and a half from Port Essington, on the Ecstall River, a tributary of the Skeena. Holmes did not want his troops too near the town, saying "it [is] desirable for many reasons that the men should not have free access to it."

Early on Monday, 23 July the British sailors gave three cheers as the soldiers left the *Caroline* to begin clearing the camp. By the afternoon, the soldiers had transformed the wilderness into a semblance of military order. Turner described his visit that day. "Sentries

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were on duty, the tents were erected and the noonday meal was being prepared. Everyone was cheerful and contented; there were no mosquitoes and the weather was fair."

This rocky point, still known today as Soldier's Point, was to be "C" Battery's home for a month. At first the men lived in tents, but daily work improved the camp until an acre had been cleared and a number of log cabins built.

Reveille was sounded every morning at six. Breakfast came after an hour's work on the camp, then the soldiers continued clearing until 2:30. The officers conducted rifle practice and drill, while Major Peters, who had served in the North-West Rebellion, instructed the men in "Indian Warfare". He sent them out in skirmishing order and directed them how best to shoot in wooded areas. They held shooting competitions, aiming at blazes on trees.

The camp had many visitors from Port Essington, judges and fishermen, ministers and cannery workers. "When the canneries shut down packing," wrote one of the officers, "the Indian family, with their canoe load of goods, would paddle up the river to the camp and take a good look at the novel sight before starting up river for home."

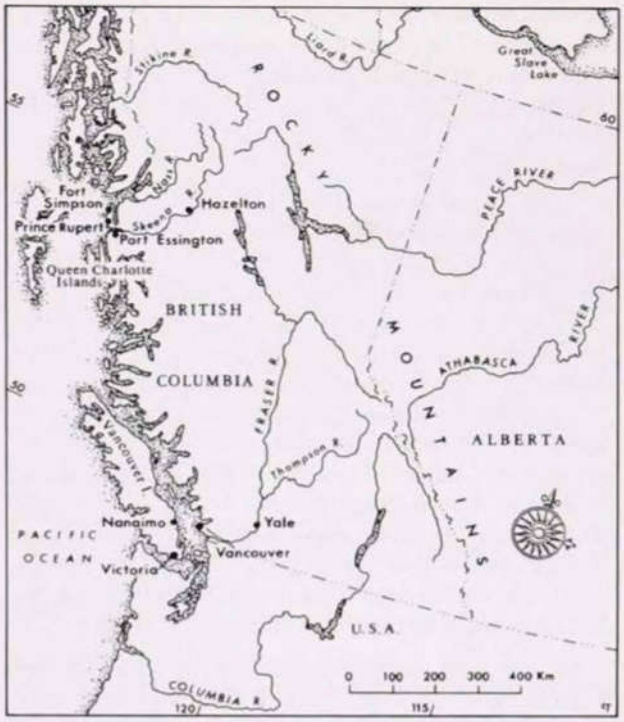
Camp life was monotonous, but Colonel Holmes allowed his men the recreation of climbing the nearby mountains to hunt mountain goat and bear, many of which were brought back as trophies. He rationalized this departure from routine to his superiors, saying the hunting and climbing showed how adaptable the men were to work.

Back in Victoria the newspapers carried varied opinions on the uprising. "An Old Settler", as one writer signed his name, supported the constables in teaching the Indians the law, while another writer, "M.P.P.", felt that the white man's law should not interfere in purely native matters. Robert Cunningham of Port Essington thought the trip would prove to be nothing but a picnic for the troops. Even Gabriel Dumont, co-leader of the North-West Rebellion, was asked for a statement: "All that I can say is that the government had better be careful with these Indians as they are dangerous. . . It is better to treat them kindly because if a genuine Indian uprising takes place the government will not have to face a few hundred men like the last campaign, but from 30,000 to 40,000 of them".

On the sixth day of August, after the battery had been camped for two weeks, Holmes received word from Roycroft that the services of his men would not be required. The situation had been greatly exaggerated and was now peaceably settled. Two days later a letter from the Premier informed him that the steamship *Cariboo Fly* had been chartered to carry "C" Battery back to Victoria. Holmes assumed that since she had been chartered, the *Cariboo Fly* would arrive shortly, but day after day there was no sign of the ship. Roycroft and the constables arrived in Port Essington on 10 August and left a week later aboard the steamer *Sardonyx*. Holmes would have had his men aboard her, too, but for the government order.

While the soldiers had enjoyed fine weather for most of their stay, their feeling of abandonment at seeing the *Sardonyx* depart without them was heightened by a north coast deluge. Tents and log houses that had served well in fair weather were now uninhabitable. Clothing, bedding and supplies were drenched. Even the usual Sunday church service was cancelled, "the difficult task of keeping dry being the sole work".

When another steamer, the *Princess Louise*, arrived in Port Essington with an excursion party aboard, Holmes decided his men could take the northern camp no longer, despite official orders. Accordingly, he arranged passage on the steamer, which ran up the Ecstall River to within one hundred yards of the camp. Three hours later the site was cleared and gear and men were aboard the ship. By that afternoon, 20 August the *Princess Louise* was steaming down the Skeena. "Once on board," said the battery's reporter, "our troubles were at an end".



The return voyage was as uneventful as the rest of the campaign. The soldiers joined the tourists on a trip to the Queen Charlotte Islands before heading south. As Lieutenant Ogilvie later wrote, "We saw some wonderful Totem Poles and some remarkably pretty Indian Girls." Six days later "C" Battery was back home, where the soldiers were greeted with a hearty welcome. After unloading the supplies and outfit, they formed in column and marched to their barracks. Colonel Holmes told the press that he had thoroughly enjoyed the expedition, "though it was without the excitement of exchanging a shot".

Once home, Holmes wrote to Premier Davie explaining his reasons for taking the *Princess Louise* rather than awaiting the *Cariboo Fly*. Davie was unhappy with the colonel, however, and sent a curt note reminding him that he had been duly informed of the charter. "I have to point out," wrote the premier, "that the contract with the steamer *Princess Louise* was not made with the Government or by its authority." He never did explain, however, why the *Cariboo Fly* was so long in reaching the Skeena.

The cost of the expedition was over $8,000, and there was much debate over who should pay. The provincial cabinet felt that, as it was an Indian matter, the Dominion was liable. Ottawa refused to pay, saying the province had instituted the action. But all agreed that the presence of "C" Battery on the Skeena at the height of the fishing season had been worthwhile, even if the troops had seen no action. Holmes concluded his report of the affair to his superiors in Ottawa with the words: "Although the proceeding has had a peaceful termination, I feel and am happy to know that it will have a permanent salutary effect on the Indian element in the North-West." And perhaps the "Skeena War" helped reduce the resentful feeling against "C" Battery among the old-timers of Victoria as well. ♦

Ken Campbell has published numerous articles on the history of the Skeena River and Prince Rupert area. He lives in Prince Rupert.

"C" Battery finally returned to Victoria aboard the SS "Princess Louise", shown here on the Skeena at Inverness Cannery, owned by J.H. Turner, B.C.'s minister of finance.

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A STORY OF WORLD WAR II

Saskatchewan In the Auvergne

By Hubert G. Mayes

Canadian tourists catching sight of a road sign at the edge of the French town of Les Martres-de-Veyre must wonder if their eyes are deceiving them. But the words are there in large black letters: *Les Martres-de-Veyre ville jumelée avec Wynyard (Canada)*. Above the words on the left is the crest of the French town. In the middle there is a symbol formed by two intersecting circles, a key and the words *cités unies*. On the right is another crest consisting of two heads of wheat, a large W and a scroll bearing the words "Wynyard Saskatchewan".

Why would a town on the Canadian prairie be twinned with a town in the hills of central France? If you were to ask this question on the street or at the Town Hall in Les Martres-de-Veyre, you would soon have an answer, but you would likely hear only a small part of the story behind this unusual association. It is a story that deserves to be told in detail, not only for its human interest, but also because of its origin in events of World War II. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the war, and for many Canadians it will be a time for remembering.

Late in 1942, a bomber belonging to Canadian Squadron 405 was returning to its base in England after a raid on Stuttgart when it was attacked by a German fighter plane. The bomber received several hits and the tail section was soon on fire. The rear gunner, Peter Dmytruk of Wynyard, Saskatchewan, reported that he was wounded, but continued to tell the crew the direction from which the fighter was coming in. As he spoke, his voice became weaker — a sign to the others that he was probably losing consciousness. The second onslaught by the fighter caused such severe damage that the order to bail out had to be given. The plane was then above Vitry-le-François in the Marne Valley, about 200 kilometres east of Paris. In spite of his wound, Peter was able to parachute safely from the burning aircraft. However, since the jump was made at a high altitude, he landed at a considerable distance from the others and had no further contact with them. He made his way southwards, receiving help from the French police and managing to escape detection by the German army of occupation. His plan was to reach neutral Spain, where he would be able to obtain transportation back to Britain. As he crossed the Auvergne, the mountainous central region of France, he came upon two men working on a road. One of these men, a Monsieur Planeix, took him home and found him some civilian clothing. It soon became clear that Peter would not be safe in this friend's home because his unfamiliar presence in the district was arousing suspicion. It was arranged that he would work in a food store in a suburb of the nearest big city, Clermont-Ferrand. To conceal his identity, he would pretend to be unable to speak. This ruse worked so well that before long he was confidently serving a German officer.

Some time later, Peter learned through the underground communication network that he could be smuggled out of France, but he chose instead to remain with his friends and serve the allied cause as a member of the French resistance movement, known as the *maquis*. He joined one of the underground units, and as "Pierre le Canadien" acquired a reputation for his courageous participation in raids on German installations and transportation.

On the night of 8-9 December 1943, a team of saboteurs blew up a German troop train about 500 metres south of the railway station in Les Martres-de-Veyre. Peter and a comrade, unaware that this had happened and that the Germans were on the alert, were

A view of Les Martres-de-Veyre, taken by the author.

approaching the town in a light vehicle when they suddenly found themselves facing a roadblock. The driver, Robert Janthial, whose code-name was Dumas, drove straight for the roadblock as the Germans opened fire. Peter was fatally wounded by the first hail of bullets. Dumas was successful in breaking through the first roadblock, but on reaching the second, his vehicle, its tires blown out and its headlights shattered, came to a stop. In spite of multiple wounds, Dumas managed to escape. The Germans, enraged at having failed to capture him, turned their anger on Peter's body, leaving it by the road and forcing some of the inhabitants of the town to file past it as a warning. Under the cover of night the French removed the body, and the next morning the police of a nearby town asked Monsieur Planeix to come and identify it. Peter was then buried in the cemetery of Les Martres-de-Veyre.

After the war, Monsieur Planeix retrieved the box in which he had buried Peter's uniform and documents, hoping that some day he would be able to place them in the hands of relatives. In the meantime, he or anyone else who had known the young Canadian were not likely to forget him. There were, of course, his exploits with the resistance movement and the great affection and admiration he had earned in the region. But in addition to these factors, his death had taken on a symbolic value for the people of Les Martres-de-Veyre: he had become in a sense the saviour of the town. The Germans had threatened to kill some of the inhabitants unless they revealed the identity of the men who had been carrying out acts of sabotage. Peter's death seemed to satisfy the Germans' desire for revenge, and there were no reprisals.

As an expression of their gratitude, the people of the town erected a stone monument at the place where Peter was killed. Some time later this memorial was moved to a small park nearby which has been named "Square de la Résistance". The wording on the monument reads as follows: *A la mémoire du soldat allié Demytruck Peter, né à Wynyard, Saskatchewan (Canada), âgé de 23 ans, dit Pierre le Canadien au maquis d'Auvergne, tué ici par les Allemands le 9 décembre 1943, mort pour la liberté.* A street in Les Martres-de-Veyre named rue Pierre le Canadien also

honours the memory of the resistance hero, and a ceremony of remembrance is held in the town every December.

In the years following the war, attempts were made by the people of the French town to communicate with the family of Peter Dmytruk and the town of Wynyard. It was not until 1972, however, that contact was finally established through the determined efforts of Dr. Paul Brun, mayor of Les Martres-de-Veyre. He suggested to Walter Goodyear, mayor of Wynyard, that the two towns, already linked by their connections with Peter Dmytruk, should become twins, and that an official ceremony to mark the event be held in Les Martres-de-Veyre on 10 December 1972, with representatives from Wynyard in attendance. After overcoming many difficulties, Mr. Goodyear and other supporters of the project succeeded in arranging for a delegation of twelve people, including seven war veterans, to make the trip to France. The Canadians were warmly received by the people of Les Martres. Language difficulties were eased by the presence of two bilingual Canadian students who were spending a year as language assistants in Clermont-Ferrand. On 9 December a special mass was celebrated, Mr. Goodyear was invited to plant a commemorative tree, and a ceremony took place beside Peter Dmytruk's grave in the cemetery. The next day, the official ceremony confirming the twinning of the two towns was held at the monument, and a plaque was unveiled at the town hall.

Collection of Walter Goodyear

Peter Dmytruk.

Collection of Walter Goodyear

"Pierre le Canadien" (right) with his French friends.

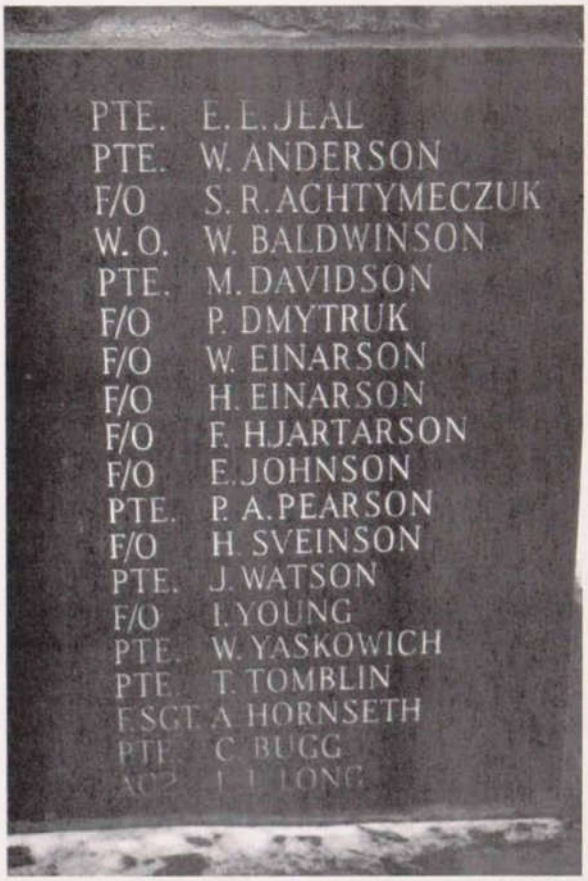

Photo by Hubert Mayes

The plaque on the Wynyard war memorial. Peter's name is sixth from the top.

The following year, a group of citizens from Les Martres-de-Veyre, led by Dr. Brun, visited Wynyard. They took part in ceremonies at the Civic Centre, where a plaque was unveiled, and at the war memorial on which Peter Dmytruk's name is inscribed. These visits, in both directions, continued in the years that followed, partly because Forrest Pederson, who succeeded Walter Goodyear as mayor, and Ed Brady, a navy veteran, were strong supporters of the twinning arrangement. Exchanges were also organized between teenagers of the two communities. Close and enduring friendships were made, and the people of the two towns enjoyed the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of each other's geography, history, language and traditions. On one occasion, for example, the French delegation visited Batoche, where French-speaking Metis took up arms in 1885 to protest the neglect of a remote Canadian government. For their part, a large number of the citizens of Wynyard, a town where French has never had a strong presence, brought in a teacher of conversational French to help them prepare for their exchange visits.

Though two of Peter's cousins were members of the 1972 delegation to France, they do not live in Wynyard. There are in fact no members of his family there except his stepmother, who married the father late in life and did not know Peter personally. There are some who still remember him in the town, but the tributes to his happy disposition, his intelligence and his courage are to be found mainly in the testimonies of those who were his companions in the air force and the maquis.

There is an interesting sidelight to the story of the twinning of Wynyard and Les Martres-de-Veyre. As a result of the attention which the initial visit to France received in various newspapers and on national radio, a member of Peter's crew, W. A. N. Macdonald of Moncton, New Brunswick, learned to his great surprise that his friend did not die in the rear gun turret of the abandoned plane as he had always assumed. "It was ironic," he said in a letter to Mayor Goodyear, "that after I came back to Canada my Mother told me she had a letter from Mrs. Dmytruk stating she had a letter from a person in Europe stating that Pete was still alive and well. This, I could not believe as I was sure that he went down with the flaming plane; so much so that I have a poem in my log book called "My Buddy", and it is the only one of the crew showing a cross on the poem's drawing; all others had open parachutes". Mr. Macdonald's letter also gave a detailed account of the ill-fated mission, including his own landing, badly wounded, in the Marne River, his recovery in a Parisian hospital after being handed over to the Germans, and his years in a prisoner of war camp.

As long as there are people living in Les Martres-de-Veyre who recall the exploits and engaging personality of Pierre le Canadien, and as long as there are citizens of Wynyard who remember Peter Dmytruk or have been involved in the exchange visits, the twinning of the two towns will remain a vital link. However, as the years pass and the war becomes little more than a chapter in the history books for younger generations, there is a possibility that the association between the two towns will become harder to maintain. One hopes that there will be enough concerned people in both communities to keep the memory of Peter Dmytruk alive and to preserve the warm human contacts that have been established between the two towns. ♦

Hubert G. Mayes, recently retired from the faculty of the University of Winnipeg, has been a frequent contributor to "The Beaver" on topics touching on French associations with Canada.

A Kingdom by the Sea

By J.M. Bumsted

Mattie Gunterman (see page 49) photographed herself on the stove, with friends, in 1902.

While all Canadian provinces have exceptionally varied historical backgrounds, none exhibits greater extremes and more profound paradoxes than British Columbia. Possessed of a temperate climate on the coast and a rich array of natural resources everywhere, British Columbia has always been a place where they do things differently. The climate and natural environment meant that, in pre-European times, native peoples were able to develop a number of sophisticated cultures exhibiting conscious aesthetic values and based upon highly developed class systems.

The arrival of the European complicated matters, but the province's development has always rested on the rapacious exploitation of its natural resources, with certain inevitable results. While some British Columbians, most notably in Victoria, managed to recreate bastions of gentility on the Pacific Slope, others did not share in that experience. The province's record with its Asiatic newcomers was, until very recently, quite deplorable. The lives of those who extracted the resources, whether European, Asiatic, or native in origin, tended to be brutalized and difficult. Not surprisingly, British Columbia has always had the most radical labour movements in Canada, as well as some of the nastiest labour relations in the western world. Wasting its natural and human resources in a kind of social Darwinistic profligacy, the province has always been the home of a boom-bust economy headed by a capitalist elite with only the most minimum of social consciences. Little has ever been allowed to stand in the way of resource exploitation in British Columbia. In a gardening video made a few years ago, the man soon to become the province's premier kept up the image, demonstrating to the viewer that the way to control those pesty aphids was with good solid doses of high-powered pesticide. Damn the side effects, full speed ahead!

The books under review here largely focus on the historical development of British Columbia. They come from a variety of perspectives, ranging from the most abstruse scholarly approaches to several levels of popular history to autobiography. Not all of the scholarship comes from the discipline of history; indeed, most considered herein represent other academic fields that sometimes operate in the historical mode. Marxist theory is well represented. Not all of these books are consciously critical of the environment of exploitation that constitutes one of the major themes of British Columbia's historical past, although some are quite deliberately articulate about it. But all these works, in one sense or another,

manage to suggest both the richness and tragedy of the province's development.

Wayne Suttles is an anthropologist who has pioneered in the historical ethnography of the native cultures of the Northwest Coast. *Coast Salish Essays* collects and reprints sixteen of his articles and unpublished papers, spanning the years from 1951 to 1981. Suttles has never been impressed with a notion of an Edenic prehistory for the region, and much of his work has involved attempting to find ways of looking at the evidence in other contexts. His work has also been characterized by an increasing sense of the importance both of ethnohistory and of linguistics. Most of his research has focussed on the Coast Salish people, and his greatest achievement has undoubtedly been to distinguish these folk from people further to the north who have dominated most discussion of Pacific Northwest native culture.

While collections of essays summarizing the lifetime's work of an influential and important scholar are relatively common in the academic world, this genre is seldom a particularly happy one for the general reader. Like most such collections, *Coast Salish Essays* can really be appreciated only by the author's own colleagues within the discipline. Most of the academic debates referred to herein are extremely specialized, and many of them have ceased to be matters of ongoing currency even for anthropologists and ethnologists. Suttles' more recent work on linguistics is perhaps the most alive within the general scholarly community, but is on the whole the least thoroughly developed part of the book, remaining suggestive rather than conclusive. Nevertheless, underlying many of these essays is an attempt to understand native mythology that bears attentive reading. For those interested in Northwest Coast native cultures, Suttles is indispensable, however specialized his vocabulary and concerns.

Equally specialized is another important study of another important component of British Columbia's racial heritage, Peter Li's *The Chinese in Canada*. One of Li's strengths, it must be emphasized, is that he does not restrict his study to the Pacific Slope alone — or to the more distant historical past. But the most accessible sections of this book do deal with the Chinese in the period in which they were mainly immigrating to and residing in British Columbia. A sociologist by training, Li has succeeded in the first half of his book in writing for the wider audience, although the

John Stanton, author of "Never Say Die!".

second half dealing with the modern Chinese tends to shift into statistical analysis and a theoretical context that many readers may find a bit heavy-going. Although he does not allude directly to the conundrum, Li's early chapters are shaped by an awareness of the central problem of explaining the host society's attitudes to the Chinese: avoiding the tautological explanation that white Canadians (mainly British Columbians) were racist because they held racist attitudes. While he does not quite escape the problem, he comes closer in a brisk analysis than most of the scholars upon whom he relies heavily.

Li's explanation of the early "Chinese Question" in Canada is economically driven; institutionalized racism "was a structural imperative that had little to do with cultural misunderstandings or individual idiosyncrasies". The Chinese were recruited to fill a labour need in the Canadian economy, and most were agricultural peasants who came temporarily in hopes of making enough money to retire comfortably in China. He emphasizes that the racial discrimination against the Chinese was sanctioned by the state and designed to facilitate the exploitation of cheap labour. The newcomers experienced not only economic exploitation but social and cultural fragmentation because of the predominance of single males enforced by Canadian policy.

Li does not focus on the culture of the Chinese in dealing with their experience because it does not fit well with his structural approach. Downplaying culture works fairly well for the early period, when most Chinese came from a fairly homogeneous segment of one geographic region, but makes considerably less sense in dealing with the more recent experiences of the Chinese, where racism is far less overt. It may be true that the improved situation for the Chinese results from the industrial expansion of Canada since World War II, but such a generalization obscures more than it explains. Li is aware that recent Chinese immigration has been both culturally and socially heterogeneous — probably politically heterogeneous as well — but his statistically-based treatment of the modern Chinese in Canada makes no distinctions and tells us far less than it should. Often hard reading because of the academic shorthand and jargon employed, this little book is nonetheless easily the best brief treatment available of some important issues in the history of both British Columbia and of Canada.

Unlike Peter Li, Robert Lloyd Webb offers no suggestion of a Marxist perspective. Written in the language of mainstream historians, *On the Northwest* offers a history of commercial whaling in the Pacific Northwest from its origins to its recent (1967) demise. Although never highly publicized, whaling was an important component of the fishing economy of British Columbia. It was also an integral part of the province's history of the exploitation of its rich heritage from nature.

Webb's book makes for depressing reading, as generation after generation of whalers improved their technology and, in the process, overhunted their prey. The dividing line between exploitation and overexploitation came at the end of the nineteenth century, when whaling added full mechanization to its earlier commercialization. Like most branches of the fishery, the whaling story does not simply involve Canadians, but increasingly becomes an international one. But while the whaling community became ever more efficient in harvesting and processing all parts of the whale, it never showed the slightest interest in preserving its stock until it was depleted beyond the point of no return. Only a few species remain in relatively small numbers, now threatened as much by oil spills as whalers.

Webb's theme in this extremely able and well-written book is taken from the work of the Norwegian scientist Johan Hjort, one of the world's leading experts on whales. "The whaling industry," Webb concludes, "was never subject to the same economic laws as other businesses. Instead, every improvement, every increase led only to the further reduction of the very animals whose presence encouraged incentive" (p. 286). To some extent such a view represents overstatement, not in terms of the reduction but in terms of the uniqueness of whaling as a business enterprise. Too much Canadian — and especially British Columbian — enterprise has followed the same pattern, although it is true that some natural resources are more easily renewable than others. Whaling is distinguished mainly for the fact that it has passed the point of recovery. But the patterns are so painfully obvious. Technological innovation always comes principally on the harvesting side of the natural resource, rather than on the conservation side. Indeed, concerted research into preservation of the resource begins only after unremitting rapaciousness has made it virtually impossible to save the commodity. In some senses whaling is no different than other aspects of the fishery, or of other extractive industries such as mining and timbering, or indeed of other resource-based enterprises such as agriculture. The thought is not encouraging.

All economies are subject to a variety of cycles, but exploitative resource economies are especially susceptible to the worst of the boom and bust cycle. When the economic downturn is lengthy and international, economies such as that of British Columbia really suffer. Lorne Brown's *When Freedom Was Lost* sketches some related aspects of the Great Depression of the 1930s, concentrating on the itinerant unemployed. Such individuals, mainly single younger men, were to be found everywhere in Canada, but not surprisingly, were particularly numerous and alienated in British Columbia, which becomes the central arena for this account.

A political scientist at the University of Regina, Brown comes at his topic from the left, dealing far more favourably and sympathetically with the Communist Party and radical political responses than most Canadian historians. Not surprisingly, he is especially critical of the nation's politicians, partly for their lack of imagination in dealing with widespread economic disaster but mainly for their overt reliance on force to suppress the various attempts at political protest that emanated from the ranks of the unemployed. The government's use of work camps, many in the interior of British Columbia, may have removed from the cities those that the authorities did not attempt to relieve through traditional means, but also served to radicalize a segment of the population that had little to lose through extreme action. At the same time, Brown emphasizes, most of the protest of the radicalized unemployed was not really "revolutionary" — although governments saw any agitation as politically dangerous. Over-reaction was the order of the day, as the Canadian government's handling of the On-to-Ottawa Trek that originated in Vancouver in 1935 well demonstrates. The reader need not share the author's politics to appreciate the general thrusts of his argument. This book is a useful one, exposing a nasty underside to the Depression that many Canadians at the time (and since) preferred to ignore.

We turn now from the academy to historical writing in other traditions. One of those alternate approaches is autobiography, and the crop of books under review includes two that really fit into this genre, although they are quite unlike one another. Neither, however, represents "pure" autobiography, reflecting rather a first-person approach with autobiographical tendencies. *Never Say Die!*, subtitled "The Life and Times of John Stanton, a Pioneer Labour Lawyer," is a curious book, its title promising considerably more than is delivered. One of a handful of members of the British Columbia bar who was sympathetic to the union movement in the province, Stanton became involved in many of the significant legal battles of his time.

Unfortunately, Stanton has chosen to write a book of far more interest to other lawyers (many of whom do not share his politics) than to the general public. There is no attempt at explanation of how he became radicalized, or how his political position affected his personal life. Indeed, there is virtually no personal life in this book. What we have instead are a series of lawyer's case files, based upon Stanton's papers now deposited in the University of British Columbia library. For those interested in the legal intricacies of the province's labour law, the eighteen legal cases herein

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described will hold enormous fascination. They are more lawyer's briefs than full-fledged historical accounts, however. We learn much about the case from the perspective of those Stanton was representing, and very little about the other side. For those interested in John Stanton as a person, this book offers little concrete, although the diligent reader may derive some view of his personality from the text itself.

While John Stanton's title suggests an autobiography that is not present, John Kendrick's *People of the Snow: The Story of Kitimat* fails to indicate an autobiography at all. Kitimat is a resource town in northern British Columbia, home of one of the world's largest aluminum smelters and of a pulp and paper mill. Unlike many northern resource communities, Kitimat was carefully planned by Alcan, its social engineering based on the British "Letchworth" model of the Garden City. Kendrick was intimately associated with Kitimat from its earliest origins, serving as part of the team that surveyed its hydroelectric potential in the 1930s and then as part of the Alcan management team, rising to general manager of the smelter. It is difficult for him, therefore, to separate his own story from that of the town, and the two tales often become closely interwoven in the pages of this book.

As a professional employee of the resource exploiters, the author is of course in no position to distance himself from their assumptions. He emphasized that he retains no close ties to Alcan, and in some ways his "unauthorized account" does provide useful behind-the-scenes detail, particularly on the manoeuvering after the war that led to the choice of the Kitimat site and the subsequent flooding of the Kitimat Valley for hydroelectric purposes. Kendrick insists that what was done produced no outcry from environmentalists — although some from the residents who would have to move — and observes laconically that "People interested in the protection of Nature had not yet invented a name for themselves" (p. 66). As an engineer he does not appear in the text to have had many qualms himself about what was being done, although he does qualify matters in his last chapter.

Much of the interest of *People of the Snow* inevitably focusses upon the author himself, both for what he tells the reader and what he does not. He has a tendency to the anecdotal, exclaiming at one point, "If the editor cuts out all the digressions in this book it will be considerably shortened" (p. 23). The editor left the exclamation, but one wonders whether the red pencil was otherwise heavily exercised to produce this final product. More to the point, Kendrick never quite succeeds in getting beyond his own personal perspective. The problem is best revealed in the crucial chapter on the planning and creation of the town of Kitimat itself. Kendrick's account is an implicit indictment of both Alcan and the social planners of Kitimat, but it is impressionistic rather than definitive. The author has not employed his own intimate knowledge of the process to provide us with a really satisfying detailed account. In a concluding chapter of personal opinion, Kendrick outlines with benefit of hindsight a number of things that could and should have been done differently, but concludes with a ringing defence of carefully considered environmental exploitation in the larger interests of "future generations". As for Kitimat, he comments, "The founding of Kitimat did some good, some harm. Some things were done well, some badly. This has long been the hallmark of human enterprise" (p. 174). But, Kendrick adds, "If I were to have it all to do again I would do it differently, but I would do it." As this last sentence in the book demonstrates, what we have here is John Kendrick's Kitimat. So long as the reader understands this point, there is much value for money in this account.

Terry Reksten's *"More English Than the English"* also gives value for money. This anecdotal history of Victoria concentrates on the nineteenth century, with a particular emphasis on the city's official and semi-official elite. The author makes no apologies for her approach, insisting in her forward that the book has been "written for those who might not usually find pleasure in reading about the past" (p. viii). It is apparently intended for the Victoria tourist (both visitor and resident), concluding with some maps and a listing of 61 points of historic interest described in the text. Reksten has done considerably better than to provide simply a tourist guide, however. She is extremely knowledgeable about her city's past, and even manages to build a larger thesis about the nature of the city. In a brief introduction, she observes that Victoria was not English, but — at least for the upper classes — a "unique combination of English social values and American architecture with a population which included English, Blacks, Chinese, Scots, Irish, Germans, Indians, and Americans" (p. xi). While Emily Carr's father might have wanted his home to look English, she adds, "he didn't want it to *be* England." This theme often gets lost in the pages that follow, but for the reader who recalls its existence, the evidence is constantly made available. Copiously illustrated, this book can usefully be read by anyone planning to tour Victoria, or by anyone interested in the origins of "San Francisco on the Solent."

Also intended for the touring visitor is Elsie G. Turnbull's *Ghost Towns and Drowned Towns of West Kootenay*. This charming little book actually delivers considerably more

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than it promises as a guidebook to the heritage of a fascinating region. Few of those who drive the main highways of the West Kootenays can possibly appreciate how much has happened in the past not far from the pavement. Turnbull describes briefly the histories of over fifty vanished communities, providing some useful and occasionally wonderful photographic illustrations along the way. The book is geographically organized by districts, and suffers from an inevitable scrappiness that the author might have mitigated with a better introductory chapter. But within its pages are many, many nuggets of information.

Most of the lost ghost communities of the Kootenays flourished briefly at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. They were often associated with the advances of railroad construction, that made possible the speculation in and exploitation of mineral deposits in this mountainous region. For the most part, the communities were the homes of miners and their families, subject to all the natural disasters associated with mining and to the whims of the market as well. Many were ultimately destroyed in hydroelectric flooding. All were founded in the era of the camera, and many of the illustrations in this work are striking and unfamiliar.

The systematic recounting of the stories of over four dozen mining communities that eventually failed for a variety of reasons has its own impact. As well, Turnbull has the advantage of the writings of one of Canada's most colourful — and forgotten — journalists: R. T. Lowery, who itinerated the region founding newspapers in a succession of ephemeral mining communities. Lowery and his newspapers require a far more extensive treatment than Turnbull provides, but he is clearly a more colourful and important figure than that dull Victoria journalist Amor de Cosmos, who is probably the only early newspaperman in the province presently familiar to even a minority of Canadians. As well as Lowery, Turnbull introduces us to Ida Madeline ("Mattie") Gunterman, an American who settled at Beaton in 1898, having packed a full load of photographic equipment from Seattle. Mattie was not a professional photographer, but she was a good one, and she spent a lifetime documenting with her camera the life of the people along the Lardeau River. Miraculously, some 200 of her photographic plates have survived (apparently they are now at the Vancouver Public Library). How many of the photographs used in this book as illustrations are Mattie's is not at all clear, but the few specifically attributed to her are notable for their clarity and composition. The complete collection, which has apparently toured Canada sometime in the past — Turnbull here as elsewhere is exasperatingly imprecise with her details — must be absolutely spectacular in its impact. This lovingly produced book is in many ways naive and amateurish. But the text and illustrations do, in their own way, tell us a good deal more about the exploitative nature of British Columbia's past than a dozen doctoral theses.

The history of British Columbia has not been well integrated into the national history of Canada. As these works all suggest in their own way, Canadians far removed from that province on the Pacific could do well to learn more about its past. And Canadian historians could do equally well to stop treating British Columbia as a peripheral appendage to the main story.

J. M. Bumsted is Professor of History at St. John's College, University of Manitoba.

COAST SALISH ESSAYS

By Wayne Suttles. Talonbooks, Vancouver, 1987. 320 pp., illus. $29.95.

THE CHINESE IN CANADA

By Peter S. Li. Oxford University Press (Canada), Toronto, 1988. 164 pp. $10.95.

ON THE NORTHWEST
Commercial Whaling in the Pacific Northwest 1790-1967

By Robert Lloyd Webb. University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1988. 425 pp., illus. $29.95.

WHEN FREEDOM WAS LOST
The Unemployed, The Agitator, and The State

By Lorne Brown. Black Rose Books, Montreal/Buffalo, 1987. 208 pp. $29.95.

NEVER SAY DIE!
The Life and Times of John Stanton, A Pioneer Labour Lawyer

By John Stanton. Steel Rail Publishing, Ottawa, 1987. $14.95.

PEOPLE OF THE SNOW
The Story of Kitimat

By John Kendrick. NC Press Limited, Toronto, 1987. 179 pp., illus. $12.95.

"MORE ENGLISH THAN THE ENGLISH"
A Very Social History of Victoria

By Terry Reksten. Orca Book Publishers, Victoria, 1986. 178 pp., illus. $11.95.

GHOST TOWNS AND DROWNED TOWNS OF WEST KOOTENAY

By Elsie G. Turnbull. Heritage House Publishing Company, Surrey, British Columbia, 1988. 110 pp., illus. $9.95.

Monarch of the Arctic

By Clarence Tillenius

POLAR BEARS

By Ian Stirling, photographs by Dan Guravich. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1988. 220 pp., illus. $55.00.

Of all creatures that inhabit the white arctic solitudes there is none who so symbolizes the grandeur and mystic attraction of these vast ice-bound regions as the great white bear. To catch even a fleeting far-away glimpse of a polar bear among the distant ice floes is to experience a quickening of the pulses and a surge of adrenalin that nothing else — unless perhaps a sudden confrontation with a grizzly in his mountain haunts — can quite match.

Here is a book on the polar bear by a man whose life has been spent in the Antarctic and the Arctic: he has devoted years to following, interacting with, and studying the white bear. His admiration and respect for the great bear is deep and contagious: and in these pages he has contrived to paint a more intimate portrait of this fascinating animal than has yet been done. And when this text is abetted and augmented by a host of possibly the most astonishing and unique photographs that have yet been published, by gifted photographer Dan Guravich who also has devoted years of his life to searching out and photographing these magnificent carnivores, the expectant reader knows that he is being afforded a rare glance into the arctic world.

Author Ian Stirling is not only a dedicated naturalist: as biologist and world traveller, senior research scientist with the Canadian Wildlife Service and adjunct professor of zoology at the University of Alberta, there can be no question of his qualifications: in addition he is a Fellow of the Arctic Institute of North America and recognized as one of the world's leading experts on polar bears.

Like his friend and colleague Dr. Charles Jonkel, himself a noted authority on the polar bear, Stirling has carried on a many-years-program of tranquilizing and tagging polar bears, fitting some with radio-tracking collars so their travels can be monitored and knowledge gained of their hunting techniques and denning habits. In addition, a great deal of valuable information is thus gained about the bears' physiological makeup and characteristics, information enabling the various regions where the polar bear is native to set up better-informed regulations for both the protection (where needed) and the harvesting (where required) of these magnificent animals.

In his account of the more than twenty years of intensive work with and study of the great bears, Stirling pays high tribute to his many co-workers in the field and to those dedicated scientists from various countries who had maintained continuity in polar bear studies, setting the groundwork for the great expansion in research that followed in the 1960s.

A fascinating aspect of Stirling's book, after a brief and necessarily condensed appraisal of what is known from the very rare fossil records of how the polar bear originally evolved (possibly from light-coloured brown bear or grizzly ancestors who began preying on seals along the shores in times of glaciation), is his account of the native peoples of the arctic regions — the Inuit, the Chukchi, the Siberian tribes — and their intimate relationship with the great white bear.

Unfortunately the earliest white explorers from Europe who first came in contact with the Inuit cared nothing for their history, their legends or their intimate knowledge of all forms of arctic life, so their written accounts of their voyages yield little of value to scientists. It was great good fortune that trained and caring scientists like Franz Boas, Knud Rasmussen and Vilhjalmur Stefansson came among these native people in time to record all they could of their traditions, their religious beliefs, their cults and their respect for, and propitiation of, the spirits or "souls" of the animals they killed for food.

Stirling, who shares sincerely the older hunters' reverence for the polar bear, quotes from Knud Rasmussen's account of a conversation with his friend Ivaluardjuk, an Igloolik Inuk hunter: "The greatest peril to life consists in the fact that human food consists entirely of souls. All the creatures that we have to kill and eat, all those that we have to strike down and destroy in order to make clothes for ourselves, have souls, like we have, souls that do not perish with the body, and which must therefore be propitiated lest they should revenge themselves on us by taking away their bodies". Surely it was ironic for Europeans to characterize as primitive savages a people holding such beliefs when well into the nineteenth century Christian bishops of the white race were not only denying souls to animals but denying souls to the black race, so that it was quite acceptable that as negro slaves they should be held in subjugation to their white masters.

Turning from the Inuit legends to present-day history, of all the legion of stories emanating from Churchill, Manitoba: "The Polar Bear Capital of the World" probably none aroused so fierce a controversy or evoked more outrage and ill-informed criticism from the popular press and the media — to say nothing of the animal rights protesters — than the "oiled bears" episode. Because scientists had become alarmed over the menacing and ever-increasing threat to wildlife of oil-drilling activities in the Arctic with its danger of major oil spills and probably disastrous effect on marine life, they determined to carry out an experiment where three polar bears were permitted to swim in a pool with oil on the surface. As the oil penetrated their fur, it lost its insulating factor, the bears became cold and began to shiver. They began licking the oil off as they do seal oil on their fur after a kill. However, the crude oil ingested brought a kidney failure and two bears died. The third was flown to Winnipeg for remedial treatment and after 5 months was completely cured.

The scientists were assailed from every side for their "inhuman" callousness and the torturing of helpless animals. Their answering protests that by these "experiments" even though two bears were sacrificed, the information could protect the lives of hundreds of others fell on deaf ears: yet, as Stirling correctly states: ". . . while regretting the death of the two animals, I feel that their sacrifice was of great importance to the conservation of the species". This, of course, is only common sense, and yet for many weeks the tirades of abuse went on. I am glad that Stirling mentions it in his book, since I feel it right that readers be enabled to form a just opinion on this.

The storms of controversy that the "polar bear question" often aroused were nowhere better exemplified than by a situation this reviewer in 1971 found himself embroiled in. I had been asked to create a polar bear diorama for Manitoba's Museum of Man and Nature, and was well along with the contract when I was suddenly informed by the then director,

Dr. David Hemphill, that he was quashing the project since — as he had just been informed that the polar bear was considered an endangered species — he could not in conscience allow the polar bear specimen required for the diorama to be collected. I argued that this information was not accurate, but at first to no avail. Then, by a stroke of good fortune, through the intercession of my friend Eric Mitchell (for many years a Hudson's Bay Company post manager, later president of Canadian Arctic Producers, the distribution centre for Inuit arts and crafts in Ottawa), I was able to purchase for the museum the skin of an exceptionally fine polar bear killed as part of Igloolik's legal quota by Akatsiak, noted Inuit hunter from Igloolik in the central Arctic. This specimen, mounted by taxidermist Walter Pelzer, stands over a newly killed seal in my diorama for the Manitoba Museum. In connection with this episode I must here pay a belated tribute to the greatly-appreciated assistance I was given in my researches for that diorama, by Charles Jonkel, Chris Harington and the author of this book, Ian Stirling himself.

But even more than to these men, I owe a greater debt to the Inuit hunters — and to them author Stirling also pays high tribute — for the lore they have amassed in a thousand years of sharing the Arctic with the great bears, and which one may slowly become aware of by travelling with them, sharing their hunts and hearing from them their philosophy of life and the place the polar bear holds in it.

In 1974 Ian Stirling with his wife Stella put in 603 hours of watching polar bears on sea-ice through telescopes from an observation hut atop Caswell Tower on Radstock Bay, Devon Island, (an area rich in bears and seals) and saw some remarkable examples of bear intelligence and apparent ability to observe and plan their seal hunts. From these notes it is evident that polar bears are intelligent, adaptable and have good memories. In this connection my old friend W.O. Douglas, at one time manager of the Hudson's Bay Company's Bird's Hill fur farm (but before that a constable of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police stationed in the early twenties in the Chesterfield Inlet area) acquired a little polar bear cub. Being then a bachelor, he kept it with him in his house, and it became a great favourite.

However, as it grew in size, it was evident he could not keep a full-grown polar bear in the house and reluctantly, after several mishaps, it was caged and shipped out on the *Nascopie* to the Banff Zoo. It was many years later when Douglas, visiting Banff, called at the zoo. As he stood in front of the bear cages, the bear, now a full-grown burly male, became intensely agitated, twisting about, moaning loudly and peering intently at Douglas.

"That bear knows you", the keeper said to Doug. "Well, he should", said Douglas, "I used to have him as a house pet." "Why don't you go in to him?" the keeper said, "I'll unlock the gate." "No fear", said Doug, "He may remember it was I who sent him to this zoo — he just *might* be holding a grudge, and I'm not about to be slapped for it by a thousand-pound bear!"

There are so many fascinating passages in Stirling's text I cannot begin to recount them, but surely one of the most moving is his story of a most remarkable she-bear, the famous "Linda". Born in 1965, first tagged as a yearling in Churchill in 1966, over the next 20 years she became famous to polar bear researchers all over the world. Much to the regret of Ian Stirling and his researcher colleagues who would have wished to have her end her life as she began it — a wild, free-roaming bear — their protests were overruled and Linda lives now in Albuquerque Zoo, New Mexico. The wistfulness is evident in Stirling's words: ". . . so ended the wild chapter of the history of a truly remarkable bear. No wild polar bear has been better known for so many years or through so many litters, radio collars, and other scientific experiments. Maybe none will ever be again. Yet, for all that, Linda remained one of the gentlest and most good-natured polar bears any of us has ever known. She also achieved some accidental fame in the early 1980s when she appeared on the Sierra Club's Christmas card: no one noticed the tag in her ear when the photo was printed but we recognized her instantly!"

Of all the books on polar bears that I have seen, this is certainly the finest. The quality of the writing, the sheer scope of the carefully researched scientific information (and yet set out in laymen's language) coupled with the absolutely unique impact of the amazing photographs make this a book to be treasured by everyone who responds to the wonder of the arctic world. I highly recommend it.

Wildlife artist and northern traveller Clarence Tillenius has contributed to "The Beaver" for over 40 years.

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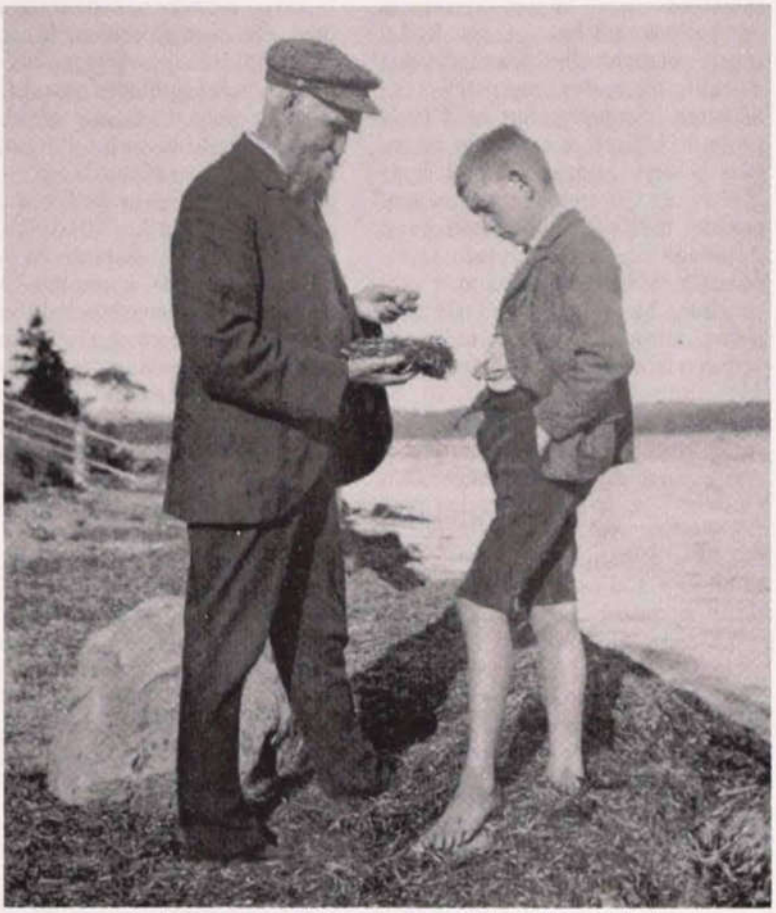
By Debra Lindsay

THE FIELD NATURALIST
John Macoun, the Geological Survey and Natural Science

By W.A. Waiser. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1989. 288 pp., illus. $30.00.



John Macoun and pupil, from the cover of "The Field Naturalist".

Scientific inquiry was increasingly pursued within an institutional setting in the second half of the nineteenth century, and W.A. Waiser's *The Field Naturalist: John Macoun, the Geological Survey and Natural Science* provides a detailed account of the institutionalization of the natural sciences within the Geological Survey of Canada. A history of the growth and development of the Natural History Division of the Geological Survey between 1880 and 1920 is constructed around the life of John Macoun (1832-1920).

In 1877 an Act of Parliament transformed the Geological Survey into the Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada. The reorganized Survey fell under the jurisdiction of the Minister of the Interior, and would subsequently undergo additional changes as a result of initiatives undertaken by Clifford Sifton and Frank Oliver. Both Sifton and Oliver were westerners with visions of opening the North-West to agriculture and settlement, and the silent acquiescence of Survey scientists was a minimum requirement for the success of their political agendas. However, politicians often solicited expert opinion from naturalists such as Macoun on the potential of the North-West for agriculture.

John Macoun was an Irish immigrant who first served as a botanist to the Survey on a temporary basis before being made a permanent employee in 1883. Macoun's appointment to the Survey had been arranged by Lindsey Russell, Deputy Minister of the Interior, as a reward for the naturalist's indefatigable efforts to promote the North-West during the 1870s. He was promoted to the position of Survey Naturalist in 1887 and made Chief of the Division of Natural History in 1910. John Macoun retained this last title until his death, although the title was honorary after 1913 when he went into semi-retirement on Vancouver Island.

Macoun had apparently always had a love for natural history, but his first official foray into governmental science was precipitated by a chance meeting with Sandford Fleming who was travelling west in 1872 to conduct a survey on the best route for the CPR. He invited Macoun to join him. Macoun subsequently went as far west as the Peace River district where he was given the responsibility of assessing the feasibility for agriculture in the area.

Macoun's assessments of the West grew increasingly positive in the

forty years following his first survey of the area. He took enormous, although not necessarily fraudulent liberties in interpreting the data that he had collected out west, and he often exaggerated his claims to authoritativeness. Macoun's enthusiastic assessments of the West were based on sincere convictions of the potential of the region to sustain agriculture, but his zeal also had a more personal dimension. Waiser convincingly demonstrates that Macoun took every opportunity to promote himself as an expert on the North-West, and he did so largely in an effort to obtain a permanent position with the Geological Survey. Although Waiser attempts to depict Macoun in the most favourable light possible, he cannot avoid the evidence attesting to Macoun's self-serving behaviour: "The results of his annual outings had to be mounted, labelled, and exhibited in some suitable fashion in order to reveal the great natural wealth that God had placed at Canada's disposal; otherwise the significance of his field collection, no matter how unique, would not be fully realized or appreciated."

Macoun was individualistic and self-congratulatory. He represented the interest of the Survey well, but he was at the same time manipulative, underhanded and conniving. He even sacrificed his son's future with the Survey in an attempt to further his own career.

James Macoun, the son of the famous "Professor", chose a career in botany. He joined the Survey as a field naturalist in 1883, but he always worked for his father, remaining little more than an obscure helpmate until his father retired in 1912. He was only made a permanent member of the Survey staff in 1898, as a reward for his efforts on an international commission studying northern seal populations. Jim, like his father, testified before numerous government commissions, giving expert opinion on all manner of scientific issues.

John Macoun, unlike his son James, understood and accepted the fact that promotions were not necessarily given for meritorious service. Political patronage was an important factor in the career advancement of civil servants, and he never hesitated to solicit the assistance of politicians and bureaucrats when necessary. Waiser provides several illuminating vignettes describing the tactics adopted by Macoun, as well as the consequences befalling those who failed to satisfy their political masters. For example, when Macoun's nemesis, Joseph Whiteaves, the Survey palaeontologist, was chosen to represent the Survey at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London in 1886, Macoun complained to British scientists that he had escorted on a CPR-sponsored tour of Western Canada in 1884. These scientists appealed to Sir Charles Tupper on Macoun's behalf, and Whiteaves was forced to relinquish his place in the Canadian contingent to Macoun. This episode illustrates one of the strengths of Waiser's book. He very ably unravels the convoluted relationships that existed between federal politicians, senior bureaucrats and Survey scientists. The elder Macoun spent four decades with the Survey, and his career provides an interesting case study of civil service employment during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Macoun laboured under four different directors and he served the interests of both Conservative and Liberal governments. But he was more than just a time-server; he was also a fairly competent field naturalist. He rarely missed a season in the field. He spent the months between the spring thaws and the winter snows in the great outdoors. He collected from one coast to the other, although erratically rather than systematically. He spent the remainder of the year engaged in special projects, testifying before Parliamentary Commissions or lecturing to the public on the virtues of the North-West. Consequently Macoun often neglected his collections once they had reached Ottawa.

Macoun preferred field work to the tasks of identifying, labelling or mounting specimens. Many of his specimens were simply stowed away until some other naturalist could find the time to perform those tasks that the Professor disliked. As Waiser aptly points out, John Macoun was a field naturalist rather than a laboratory scientist or technician. He had neither the education nor the inclination to develop the skills needed to accurately identify or classify specimens, although he did compile two catalogues: the *Catalogue of Canadian Plants* (1883-86) and the *Catalogue of Canadian Birds* (1900). Macoun's second catalogue was not, however, a major contribution to ornithology. It was distinguished by provenance rather than by scientific excellence, and when reissued in 1909 it received scathing reviews from North American ornithologists.

Macoun also spent some time in the development of museum exhibits, both abroad and at home. He went on a collecting expedition in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in order to gather specimens for a public exhibit of the resources of the region surrounding the new national park at Banff. He also assumed responsibility for organizing and arranging the natural history displays that were planned for the new Survey building in Ottawa. Waiser gives detailed descriptions of the trials and tribulations experienced by the Survey in the mid-90s, particularly as they were focused on the debate over the necessity for a National Museum.

There was some doubt as to who would occupy the Victoria Memorial Museum Building, but the

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Survey staked its claim by moving into the building before it was even completed. Waiser described the arguments in favour of a new museum building, specifically those pertaining to the storage and display of the Survey's specimen holdings. He even describes the problems associated with occupancy and construction. What he does not provide, however, is any sense of where the Survey Museum fits into the history of museology more generally.

Waiser's discussion of the debates and development associated with the Victoria Memorial Museum might have been made in relation to a broader historical context, either in terms of colonial versus metropolitan museums, or in terms of the structure and function of museums in the late nineteenth century.

More specifically, however, I would question Waiser's assumptions about the underlying basis of scientific activity at the CGS. His separation of the pure or theoretical from the applied or practical sciences is unsubstantiated except through a sweeping generalization about the Baconian tendencies of nineteenth-century science. The evidence provided in Waiser's book would seem to indicate that the distinguishing feature of the period under consideration lies less in the delineation between "practical" science and "science for its own sake", than in an interpretation of the Survey as a scientific organization that responded practically to political dictates. The Survey was beholden to politicians who required observable results in order to justify the expenditure of public funds, and its scientists were cognizant of the role that their data would have on the future of their organization. Large or even medium scale government support for the sciences was a relatively new phenomenon and observable accountability was an inseparable component of that support, as was the institutionalization and bureaucratization that accompanied government support. Moreover, Survey employees were willing participants in this development. John Macoun exemplifies a group of individuals desirous of full-time employment as scientists. Some of these "scientists" were formally educated, while some were self-taught "experts". Most of them, however, belonged to the ubiquitous middle classes and had neither the inherited wealth nor the patrons needed to sustain scientific activities. The middle classes could ill afford to finance scientific activities in a manner reminiscent of the gentlemen-scientists. Such aspirations could only be fulfilled through becoming career-scientists. Waiser's biography of John Macoun illustrates how one member of this nineteenth-century group made his way in the new world of science.

Debra Lindsay is a graduate student in history at St. John's College, University of Manitoba.

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By the Big Sea Water

By Graham MacDonald

KITCHI-GAMI
Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway

By J.G. Kohl, with a new introduction by Robert E. Bieder and additional translations by Ralf Neufang and Urike Böcker. Minnesota Historical Society Press, St. Paul, 1985. 477 pp., illus. $11.95.

If John Gunther had been alive and available in the mid-nineteenth century to write what might have been called "Inside Lake Superior" his book might have found competition for readers from the volume under review. This latest edition of Kohl's *Kitchi-Gami* was first published in German in 1859. Its appearance makes available again an important book concerning life around Lake Superior in the middle 1800s.

The addition of an informative introductory sketch of Kohl's life is an added bonus, along with the inclusion of newly translated legends of the Ojibway trickster and culture hero — Manabojou. These legends were included in the original German edition, but not in the English version of 1860. The reader interested in what happens to legends collected in the field and then passed into print will want to reflect on the editorial notes accompanying these additions by Ralf Neufang and Urike Böcker. It is noted that "Kohl's informants spoke in Ojibway, his translator related the stories to Kohl in French, Kohl wrote them in German and they are here presented in English". Thus, I suppose, is the manner in which one language and culture tumbles into another.

The great abundance of historical accounts written in English or French by early travellers and residents of Canada acts to conceal the contributions made by writers of different backgrounds. Some, such as the *Travels* of the extraordinary Swede, Per Kalm, have achieved notoriety, but much else remains obscure. There were many in the nineteenth-century German states for example, who displayed a close interest in North American affairs and particularly in the character of Indian life. Some important additions to the literature were made in the observations of Count Maximillian Zu Wied and the Algonkian linguistic studies and dictionaries of Frederic Baraga, Bishop of Marquette. Behind these men stood two giants of human geography — Humboldt and Ritter. One of the most interesting of the nineteenth-century German geographers in question was Johan Georg Kohl, map-collector *par excellence*, travel writer, and tireless promoter of large-scale academic projects. He was born in the same city as one of his great medieval counterparts, Adam of Bremen, and was stimulated to study the world at large by that same panorama of ships coming and going. He was encouraged further by the tales of a sea-faring uncle. The general failure of the European revolutions of 1848, and of the Frankfurt Parliament in particular, seems to have been the occasion for Kohl to take his leave for America, along with many of his countrymen. Robert Bieder tells us that he did not actually depart for another six years, following a long period of research into European cartographic and documentary sources with respect to a large project he was undertaking on the discovery and settlement of the New World. This life-long passion never came entirely to fruition, but the results of his research eventually ended up in the U.S. Library of Congress where the Kohl Map Collection represents a kind of national gem for geographers.

It was as something of a diversion from this large project, then, that we see Kohl heading off into the Old Northwest, book contracts in hand, to gain some direct experience of a part of North America that was still very poorly understood by Europeans. Two books came out of his three-month journey to the upper Mississippi country: *Travels in the North Western United States* (1857) and *Kitchi-Gami* (1859). The latter was prepared only after he had returned to Bremen in 1858, and he was never to return to America.

The book is written in a style appropriate to a travel writer, for his purpose was to inform rather than impress. A great deal of ground is covered and topics mundane and exotic are touched upon. There was something for everyone in this book.

As with many nineteenth-century volumes, it tends to unfold in a

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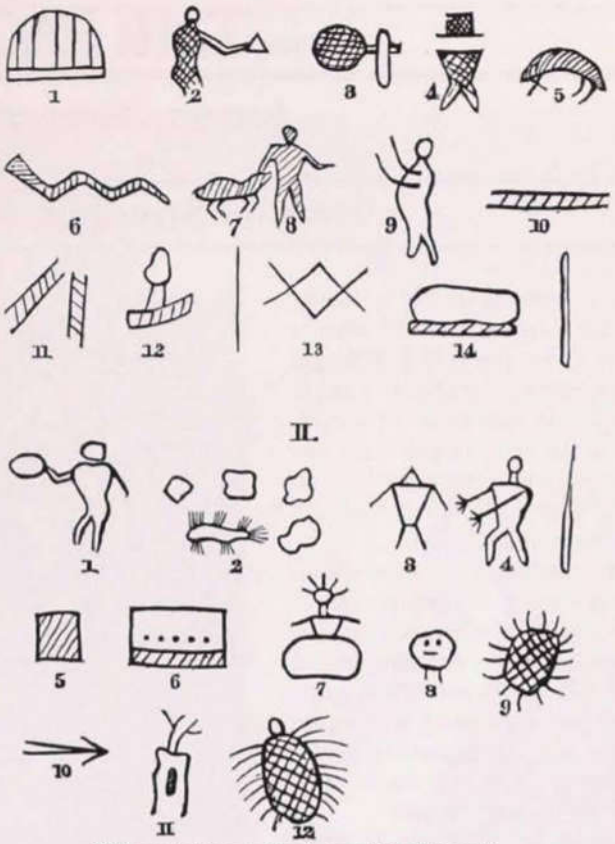
rather random way with the mandatory extended table of contents as an index to what is revealed within. Kohl provides us glimpses of a vast number of things, but seldom goes into any extended analysis. He is content to record in a remarkably objective manner, the tales and accounts of his informants. In many ways, the book is an exercise in "oral history" and Robert Bieder appropriately credits Kohl with great skill in his ability to keep his own opinions at bay and those of his informants front and centre. The usual dilemma confronting the recorder of oral tradition is present nonetheless, magnified here because of Kohl's fairly short time in the field: how does one sort out the spurious from the credible? Kohl's knowledge of European languages was a real asset however, and the inclusion of much direct quotation in French taken from old voyageurs, adds another dimension to the book.

The focus of the study, geographically, is the country from Sault Ste. Marie westwards to the Minnesota-Wisconsin border country, and if we may believe the writer, it was his affability and easy-going nature as a traveller which gained him quick and regular access to the lodges and homes of the residents of the country. The 1850s were exciting times in the developing field of ethnology and were dominated by the towering figure of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft who had spent many years in the Lake Superior country after 1818. His researches into Algonkian culture had provided the underpinning for Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha* even if Longfellow chose to utilize the name of an Iroquoian culture hero instead of the Algonkian Manabojou. Kohl was naturally familiar with Schoolcraft's work and the title, *Kitchi-Gami* is clearly related to the famous designation for Lake Superior given in *The Song of Hiawatha: — Gitche Gumme,* "The shining Big Sea Water".

In his introductory comments, Bieder provides a comparison of the intellectual styles of Schoolcraft and Kohl, and finds Schoolcraft somewhat wanting in terms of his objectivity. There can be no doubt that Kohl was of a naturally sunny disposition, taking a certain joy in the society of people in all ranks of society. The travel writer is probably well advised to cultivate such traits. Schoolcraft was undeniably stiff in many of his personal relations, and, by his own admission, far too busy to waste time in frivolous pursuits. He did editorialize on occasion, but one need not follow Bieder all the way in his assessment of the objectivity of his work. To read Schoolcraft's ethnographic accounts set out in *Intellectual Capacity and Character of the Indian Race* is to encounter page after page of highly detailed recording in which the author is remarkably absent. For example, Kohl's account of his observation of the ceremonies of the Midés (Chapter IV) is all that such an account should be in a travel book: the details are all of interest and flow as reminiscence. But for the student of this subject a great deal more is to be learned from Schoolcraft's accounts, which grew out of repeated witnessing and a long presence among the people, solidified by marriage to a powerful Indian woman.

Kohl's abilities to absorb a great deal that was new and fresh and set it out in readable form are substantial nonetheless, and this book will appeal both to those who are searching for a "good read" by the fire or those who are looking for a solid first-person account of Indian life on the eve of the opening up of the Lake Superior frontier.



Ojibway "picture writing", from "Kitchi-Gami".

Graham A. MacDonald is a Winnipeg historical consultant.

Gregory Strong: A Mine of History

Just 35 miles north of Vancouver is Britannia Mines, the first mine in Canada to be declared a National Historic Site by the Ministry of the Environment. Dedicated in a ceremony on 13 May of this year, the copper mine was recognized for its part in the development of the Canadian mining industry.

To be preserved are an ore concentrator, mine workshops and a network of service tunnels on the site. According to one member of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada which advises the ministry, this is a departure from a tradition of preserving places associated with historic events.

"Mining and Britannia fit into a newer trend by the board to look at themes," says Dr. Charles Humphries, a University of British Columbia political science professor and the B.C. member of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. "Not just a mine and concentrator is being saluted at Britannia, but in effect, we're saluting the larger aspect of mining in general."

Discovered in 1888, Britannia Mines has had a chequered history. Surviving a deadly avalanche in 1915, and a flash flood six years later, by 1928 it was reckoned the largest copper producer in the Commonwealth. Then after producing more than 50 million tons of copper, and employing more than 60,000 men over its years of operation, it closed in 1974.

Three features marked Britannia Mines as a national monument. There was the enormous size of the copper mining operation. In addition, Britannia Mines employed the newest mining practices, including flotation technology where copper ore was refined in water and acid baths which helped separate it from iron and trace minerals. And finally, in its heyday in 1928, on a payroll of 1,100 men, Britannia Mines had a multi-racial workforce, eventually representing at least 50 different ethnic groups. At one point, the mine railway even had bilingual operating signs — in English and Japanese.

The copper ore concentrator at Britannia Mines.

The centerpiece of Britannia Mines is an enormous copper ore concentrator that looms over a nearby highway. A 66-year-old landmark, the eight storey concentrator stands 64 feet high and runs up the mountainside beside it like a flight of giant grey stairs. Sheathed in rusting sheet metal, the huge concentrator is the drawing card for the B.C. Museum of Mining at the tiny community of Britannia Beach, sole remaining townsite of several once associated with the mine.

"That building's the reason we have the National Historic Site status," says Marilyn Mullan, Executive Director of the B.C. Museum of Mining. "On the one hand, it's our greatest asset. But on the other hand, it's also our greatest liability because it's so big."

According to Ms. Mullan, the only way to adequately preserve the building would be to cocoon it in a protective shell which would cost anywhere between $500,000 and a million dollars. New federal guidelines for funding the preservation of historic sites emphasize cost-sharing, with Ottawa matching local contributions. So while recognition of Britannia Mines as a National Historic Site is a welcome gesture, raising the money needed for preservation of the mine will be a considerable challenge for a community the size of Britannia Beach.

Gregory Strong is a Vancouver freelance writer.

Remembering a Man of the North

A link with an important era in the development of the Canadian North was broken on 20 May with the death in Winnipeg of William Edward (Buster) Brown in his eighty-ninth year.

Buster Brown was one of the men who opened up the North. He served in the First World War and joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1919, clearly in search of a life of adventure. The real adventure began in earnest when he joined the Hudson's Bay Company in 1925 and was posted as a clerk to Baker Lake.

The term "clerk" is misleading. To most people it summons up the image of a man standing behind a counter in a store. There was some of that for Buster Brown but there was much more besides. He was also an explorer through largely untracked terrain, making long trips for the Company by dog-team and canoe in search of likely locations for Company posts. He was also doctor, dentist and midwife. He learned to make an igloo. He was able to converse with the Inuit in their own language.

He was one of the old time Arctic Men, an iron breed that is now quickly vanishing from the scene. The circumstances of northern life in those days called for men with a special stamp, and Buster Brown, by all accounts, was one of the best — courageous, hardy and a good man to be with in a tight spot.

He was manager of the Wager Inlet post in 1926 and participated in experiments with "snowmotors" in an attempt to develop a tractor route from Wager Inlet to the Western Arctic tidewater. That experiment was unsuccessful but Buster Brown was working on the problem again in 1928, making long journeys with larger and more rugged equipment. He never gave up.

His entire career, in fact, was devoted to improving transportation and communication in Canada's Northland, always seeking new means of breaking down the isolation of our Northern communities.

HBC Archives

W.E. (Buster) Brown: "A damn good man".

As early as 1928, while at Wager Inlet, Buster Brown was tinkering with a transmitter and succeeded in sending a Morse code signal for a distance of about half a mile. It was still early days for radio in the North and the great breakthrough was still in the future, but Brown kept thinking about the problem.

He kept on tinkering. Late in 1934, when Buster Brown was a district manager working out of Hudson's Bay House in Winnipeg, he showed HBC Fur Trade Commissioner Ralph Parsons and his assistant, James Cantley, a CW transmitter he had recently built.

"I explained to Mr. Parsons how little it would cost to supply each post with a CW transmitter and receiver," Brown later recalled. "[I] brought his attention to the fact that through schedules with the Marine Radio Stations at Chesterfield Inlet, Churchill and Port Harrison, the company transmitters could readily get messages out to head office [at Winnipeg] and receive messages from head office. Mr. Parsons turned to Jim Cantley and told him to make a note to the effect that they would install four sets in the Straits the following summer."

The establishment of a Hudson's Bay Company radio network in the North marked the beginning of great change. Aircraft could be more widely used, information was more freely available and, later, the network played a major role in Canada's war effort.

When Buster Brown first went to the North it was still a hard and

dangerous frontier. Today, northern traders fly over their territories in a few hours. In his youth, Brown made monumental treks through often uncharted land by dog-team, once making a trip of more than 12,000 miles.

He ended his career in charge of northern transportation for the Company, improving shipping and the distribution of supplies in the North, still an Arctic Man of the old school.

He was a fellow of the Arctic Institute of North America, a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a member of The Order of Canada.

One of his old colleagues recently recalled that Buster Brown had once been hailed as "a damn good man" by his chief, Ralph Parsons. It was the ultimate accolade and it summed up his life.

—Christopher Dafoe

Steven Barmazel: Saving Words

Robert Montague sits in his Ottawa office and gingerly opens a nineteenth-century Quebec political pamphlet, brittle and brown with age. Paper flakes and dust cascade onto his desk. He turns a page, and it crumbles in his fingers.

"This book is useless," he says. "The first nine pages are missing and the rest would fall apart if we tried to photograph them."

Montague is executive director of the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions, an organization dedicated to photographing on microfiche all pre-1900 published Canadiana. Founded in 1978 with a grant from the Canada Council, the institute is part of a nationwide effort to preserve Canada's printed heritage. Today C.I.H.M. is funded by 26 research libraries and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Each year Montague ships to each subscribing library more than a million photographs on 12,000 microfiche. If stored properly, the fiche should last 300-400 years. "Of course," adds Montague, "they've only been around for about 50 years, so nobody knows for certain."

C.I.H.M. set out to copy about 20,000 documents in five years. But it hadn't counted on the rich lodes of material in small collections dotting the country, especially in the Maritimes. So far Montague has located 116,000 books and pamphlets and 108,000 magazines. And he has borrowed documents from 112 collections.

The institute has preserved 56,000 books and monographs on 121,000 microfiche. It is currently copying magazines, and has completed 21,000 issues. The task is far from done. "We believe there were 153,000 magazine issues published before 1900," Montague says. "We should complete the magazines in another 10 years."

Montague is racing against time. About half of all the material he seeks has already been lost: a third has disappeared, and almost a sixth can be located but is too deteriorated to photograph without suffering harm.

"You can find the main stuff. The standard works have survived. But the local-imprint works — for example from St. John — have not survived."

"What's really rare are the things used every day, like children's magazines and schoolbooks," adds Jan Michaels, the National Library's preservation co-ordinator. "They're used until they're worn out, and then they're thrown out. They are hard to find, yet everyone had them."

C.I.H.M. copies only printed material. Montague says there is no systematic effort to copy

Captain's Bad Year

The article, "Nascopie at War" [*The Beaver,* April/May 1989] was of particular interest to me as my father was Captain Thomas F. Smellie O.B.E.

Many of the incidents described in it were related to me by him, particularly the reference to the cargo of fertilizer, which he considered an insult to the *Nascopie*. He was opposed to the use of the ship for voyages to Cuba, as had the ship been lost, there would have been no means of providing provisions to the arctic posts.

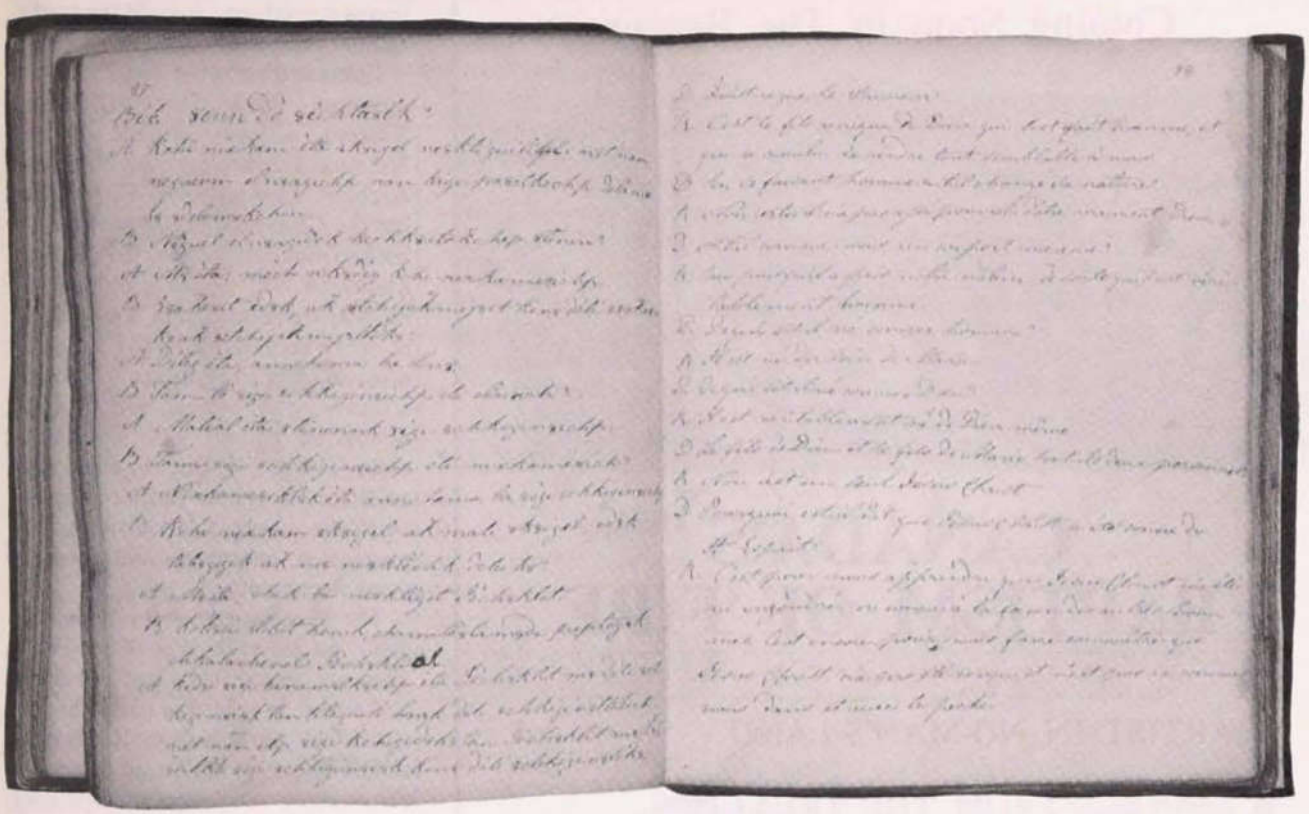
I was pleased to note the reference to the unloading of diesel oil at Resolution Island for the *St. Roch,* as my father maintained that the RCMP vessel could not have made the voyages through the Northwest Passage without the fuel supplies provided by the Hudson's Bay Company.

I had known that the storm encountered off Greenland was severe, but did not know that there was danger of the ship foundering.

On my father's return to Halifax in 1942, he received word of the birth of his first grandson and arrived in Winnipeg for the christening of Thomas Robert. Unfortunately, when he was en route to Victoria in December with my mother for a well deserved holiday, he received a telegram telling of Tommy's death at Isle a la Crosse, Saskatchewan. It was not a good year for the Captain.

Nancy Middleton,
Victoria, British Columbia.

The editor of "The Beaver" welcomes contributions to The Packet. Comments on articles, observations on historic events and fresh information from unpublished sources are particularly encouraged. Letters may be edited for length.



National Archives of Canada

This Micmac catechism and grammar (circa 1804) in the National Archives of Canada stands a better chance of surviving than books produced later in the century on inferior paper.

nineteenth-century handwritten material, except for certain select collections, such as Sir John A. Macdonald's papers. "And we haven't touched government documents. We hope to embarrass provincial governments into funding these projects themselves."

The institute also produces a computerized catalogue and a microfilm catalogue of all the documents it photographs. "This is an enormous boon to researchers, who can now call up on their computers every document held in every library across the country."

The problem of fast-disintegrating paper is rooted in the industrial revolution and literacy boom of the nineteenth century. The public hungered for reading material, and new steam-powered presses printed books by the thousands to feed the demand. But the supply of linen and cotton rag needed to make paper couldn't keep up.

A paper made from wood pulp was invented around mid-century. But wood contains lignin, which is acidic, and moisture in the paper reacts with air to form sulphuric acid. Acids eat away at the paper from day one.

"In general pre-1850 paper is in better shape than post-1850 paper, because of the linen paper," says Montague. "The problem continues with documents published today, but with documents published since World War II, the acid hasn't had the time to fully act on the paper yet."

Acid in paper is causing serious problems for libraries. In Washington, the Library of Congress has withdrawn a third of its books from circulation because the pages are brittle — that is they may crumble if handled — says Michaels. And the New York City Public Library has found that 40 per cent of its collection is brittle. Michaels expects the survey of the National Library of Canada, to be completed later this year, will find less deterioration than at the Library of Congress. The National Library building is designed to protect books from humidity, heat and air pollution, she explains.

In a windowless room in the library's basement, a man in a lab coat and tie loads a basket of books into a military-green cylinder resembling a snub-nosed torpedo tube. Réal Couture bolts the vacuum chamber shut and opens a valve. Soon the books are immersed in magnesium methyl methoxide, an

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A special issue to mark the 75th Anniversary of the outbreak of WORLD WAR I

alkaline solution which neutralizes acids in the books. The solution leaves a residue to protect the books against acids they may contact later.

Couture directs the Wei T'o Non-aqueous Book Deacidification System, a joint project of the National Library and the National Archives. Last year Wei T'o, named for the Chinese deity who protects books from destruction, deacidified about 18,000 books and 12,000 handwritten documents. Two copies of every book published in Canada must be deposited in the National Library, and almost every book deposited since 1984 has been through Wei T'o. But the mass deacidification system cannot keep up with the library's acquisitions of magazines, pamphlets and government documents.

The library's old and rare books don't go through Wei T'o either. They are deacidified a leaf at a time and stored in acid-free cases, made individually in the National Library's shop. "The most important thing we can do is provide proper storage: low lighting, low humidity and low temperatures that don't change much," says Joyce Banks, the National Library's rare books and conservation librarian.

Deacidification slows a book's deterioration, often increasing its lifespan by four or five times, but often books must also be strengthened before they can be used again. Mass strengthening techniques are still being developed. One technique, using polymers devised by N.A.S.A. to protect spacecrafts' circuit boards from humidity, will probably be ready in 10 years. This gives Michaels hope for the National Library's collection.

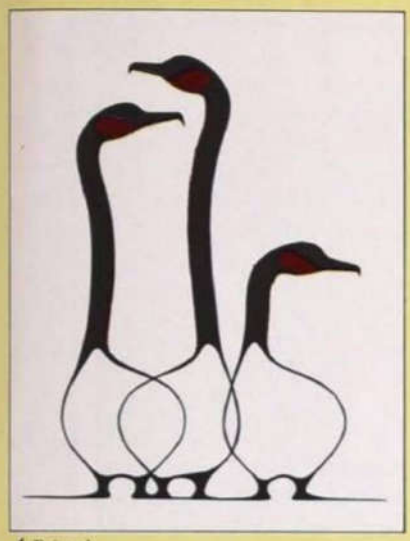
"After all," she says, "10 years is not long in terms of the history of a book."

Steven Barmazel is an Ottawa-based freelance writer.

Woodland Indian Artist

Benjamin Chee Chee

Alumni Media is pleased to present 9 reproductions of works by the late Benjamin Chee Chee. These are the only reproductions authorized by the artist's estate.



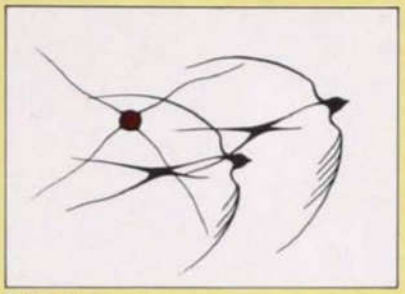
A Friends

A mainly self-taught artist, Chee Chee was a prominent member of the second generation of woodland Indian painters.

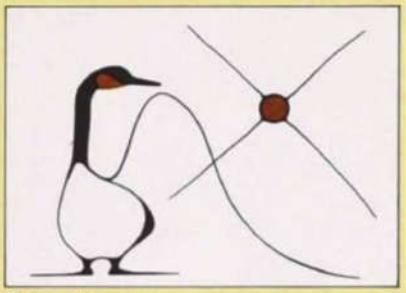
Unlike many of his contemporaries who employed direct and "primitive" means, Chee Chee's work was influenced by modern abstraction. His style reduced line and image in keeping with international modern art.

At the age of 32, at the height of his success, Chee Chee died tragically by suicide.

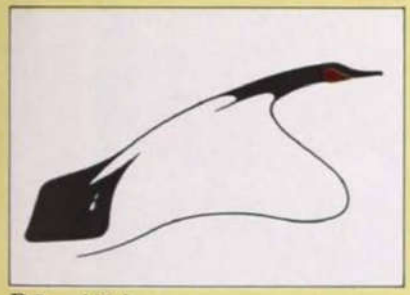
These reproductions are printed on high quality, textured stock and measure 48 cm x 61 cm (19"x24").



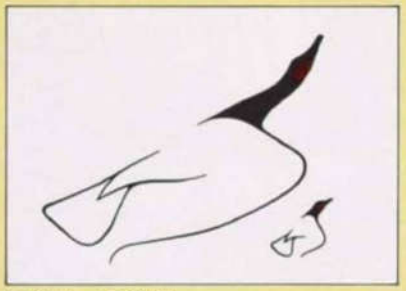
B Swallows



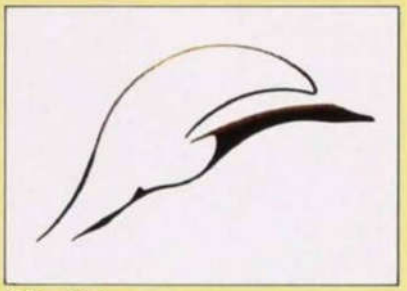
C Good Morning



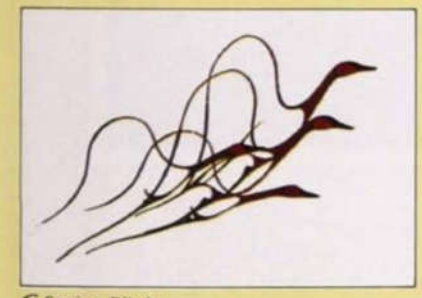
D Proud Male



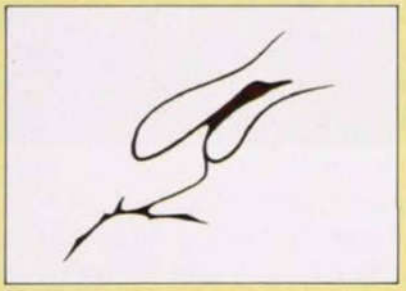
E Mother & Child



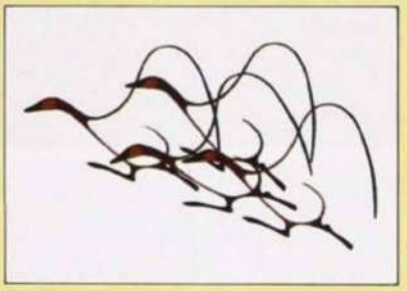
F Sun Bird



G Spring Flight



H Wait For Me



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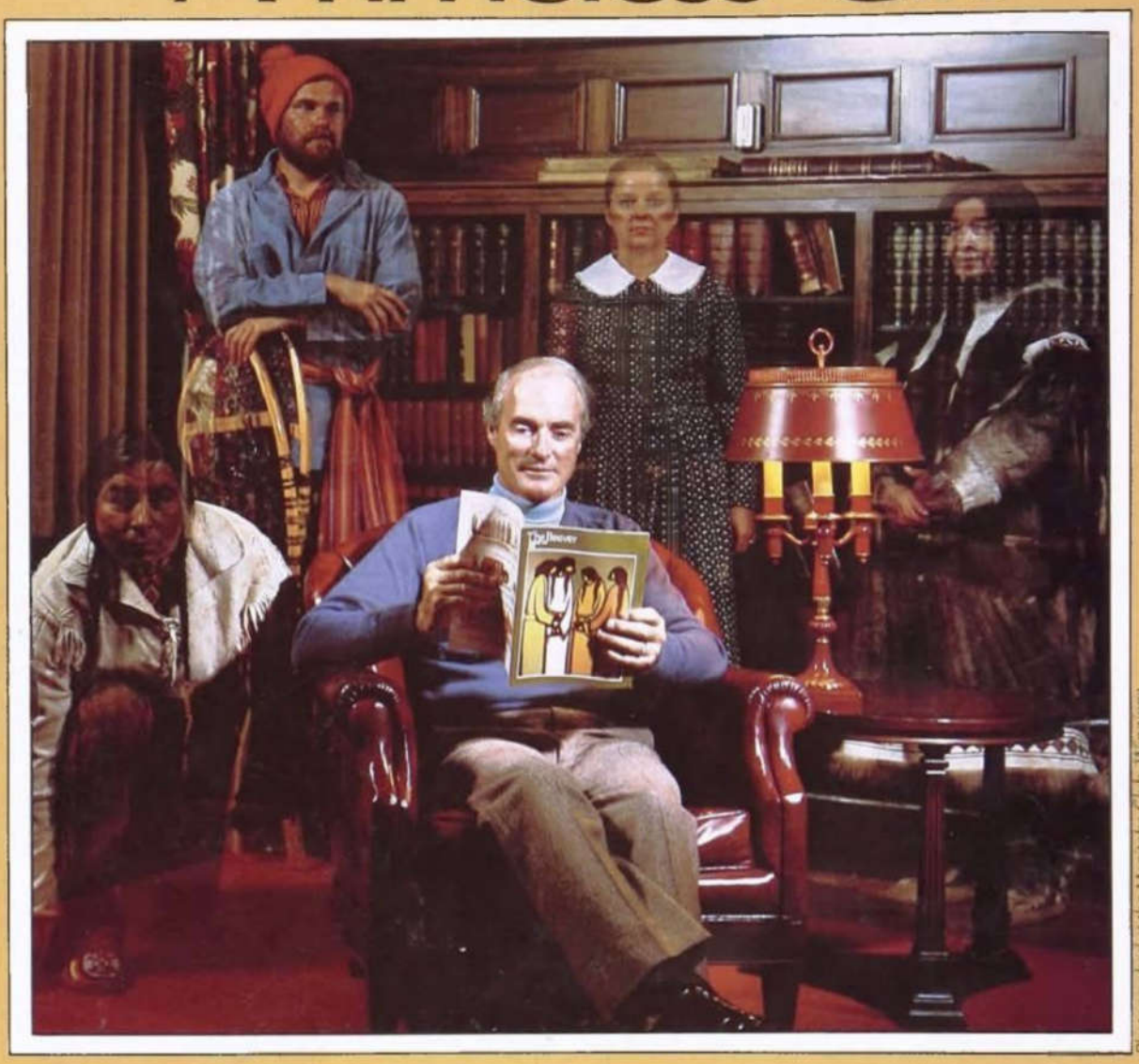

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